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THE
KING'S OWN.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "THE NAVAL OFFICER."

O you Gods !

Why do you make us love your goodly gifts
And snatch them straight away !

SHAKSPEARE'S *Pericles*.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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AT LOS ANGELES

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THE KING'S OWN.

CHAPTER I.

All desperate hazards courage do create,
As he plays frankly who has least estate.

DRYDEN.

It were all one,
That I should love a bright particular star,
And think to wed it.

SHAKESPEARE.

SEYMOUR was soon weary of the endless noise and confusion to which he was subjected on board of the guard-ship, and he wrote to Captain M——, requesting that he might be permitted to join some vessel on active service, until

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the period should arrive when the former would be enabled to resume the command of his ship. The answer from his patron informed him, that the time of his renewal of his professional duties would be uncertain, not having hitherto derived much benefit from his return to England ; that as the *Aspasia* was daily expected to arrive from the mission on which she had been despatched, and would then remain on Channel service, ready to be made over to him as soon as his health should be re-established, he would procure an order for him to join her as soon as she arrived. He pointed out to him that he would be more comfortable on board a ship in which he had many old messmates and friends than in any other, to the officers of which he would be a perfect stranger. That in the mean time, he had procured leave of absence for him, and requested that he would pay him a visit at his cottage near Richmond, to the vicinity of which place he had removed, by the advice of his medical attendants.

Seymour gladly availed himself of this opportunity of seeing his protector, and after a sojourn of three weeks returned to Portsmouth, to join the *Aspasia*, which had, for some days, been lying at Spithead. Most of the commissioned, and many of the junior officers, who had served in the *West Indies*, were still on board of her, anxiously waiting for the return of Captain M——, whose value as a commanding officer was more appreciated from the change which had taken place. Seymour was cordially greeted by his former shipmates, not only for his own sake, but from the idea that his having rejoined the frigate was but a precursor of the re-appearance of Captain M—— himself.

There is, perhaps, no quality in man partaking of such variety, and so difficult to analyse, as *courage*, whether it be physical or mental, both of which are not only innate, but to be acquired. The former, and the most universal, is most capriciously bestowed ; sometimes, al-

though rarely, Nature has denied it altogether. We have, therefore, in the latter instance, courage *nil*, as a zero, courage negative, half-way up, and courage positive, at the top, which may be considered as "blood heat," and upon this thermometrical scale the animal courage of every individual may be placed. Courage *nil*, or cowardice, needs no explanation. Courage negative, which is the most common, is that degree of firmness which will enable a person to do his duty when danger *comes to him*; he will not avoid danger, but he will not exactly seek it. Courage positive, when implanted in a man, will induce him to seek danger, and find opportunities of distinguishing himself where others can see none. Courage negative is a passive feeling, and requires to be roused. Courage positive is an active and restless feeling, always on the look-out.

An extreme susceptibility, and a phlegmatic indifference of disposition, although diametri-

cally in opposition to each other, will produce the same results: in the former, it is mental, in the latter, animal courage. Paradoxical as it may appear, the most certain and most valuable description of *courage* is that which is acquired from the *fear of shame*. Further, there is no talent which returns more fold than courage, when constantly in exercise: for habit will soon raise the individual, whose index is near to zero, to the degree in the scale opposite to courage negative; and the possessor of courage negative will rise up to that of courage positive; although, from desuetude, they *will again sink to their former position*.

It is generally considered that men are *naturally brave*; but as, without some incentive, there would be no courage, I doubt the position. I should rather say that we were naturally cowards. Without incitement, courage of every description would gradually descend to the zero of the scale; the necessity of some incentive to produce it, proves that it is "against nature."

As the ferocity of brutes is occasioned by hunger, so is that of man by "hungering" after the coveted enjoyments of life, and in proportion as this appetite is appeased, so is his courage decreased. If you wish animals to fight, they must not be over-fed, and if a nation wishes to have good officers, it must swell their pride by decorations, and keep them poor. There are few who do not recollect the answer of the soldier to his general, who had presented him with a purse of gold, in reward of a remarkable instance of gallantry, and who, a short time afterwards, requiring something extremely hazardous to be attempted, sent for the man, and expressed his wish that he would volunteer. "General," said he, "send a man who has NOT GOT a purse of gold."

The strongest incitement to courage is withdrawn by the possession of wealth. Other worldly possessions also affect it. Lord St. Vincent, when he heard that any captain had married, used to observe, emphatically, "that he

was d—d for the service,”—no compliment to the officer, but a very handsome one to the sex, as it implied that their attractions were so great, that we could not disengage ourselves from our thralldom—or, in fact, that there were no such things as bad or scolding wives.

Finally, this *quality*, which is considered as a *virtue*, and to entitle us to the rewards bestowed upon it by the fair sex, who value it above all others, is so wholly out of our controul, that when suffering under sickness or disease, it deserts us; nay, for the time being, a violent stomach-ache will turn a hero into a poltroon.

So much for a dissertation on courage, which I should not have ventured to force upon the reader, had it not been to prepare him for the character which I am about to introduce; and when it is pointed out how many thousands of officers were employed during the last war, I trust it will not be considered an imputation upon the service, by asserting that there were some few who *mistook their profession*.

The acting captain of the *Aspasia*, during the early part of his career in the service, (had there been such a thermometer as I have described, by which the heat of temperament in the party would have been precisely ascertained,) on placing its bulb upon the palm of his hand, would have forced the mercury, something between the zero and courage negative, towards the zero,—“more yes than no,” as the Italian said; but now that he was a married man, above fifty years of age, with a large family, he had descended the scale to the absolute zero.

It may then be inquired, why he requested to be employed during the war? Because he liked full pay and prize-money when it could be obtained without risk, and because his wife and family were living on shore in a very snug little cottage at Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, which cottage required nothing but furniture and a few other trifles to render it complete. Marriage had not only subtracted from the courage of this worthy officer, but, moreover, a

little from his honesty. Captain Capperbar (for such was his name) should have been brought up as a missionary, for he could *convert* any thing, and *expend* more profusely than any Bible Society. The name by which he had christened his domicile was probably given as a sort of salvo to his conscience. He called it the "*Ship*;" and when he signed his name to the expense books of the different warrant officers, without specifying the exact use to which the materials were applied, the larger proportions were invariably expended, by the general term, for "*Ship's* use." He came into harbour as often as he could, always had a demand for stores to complete, and a defect or two for the dock-yard to make good, and the admiral, who was aware of Mrs. Capperbar being a near resident, made every reasonable allowance for his partiality to Spithead. But we had better introduce the captain, sitting at his table in the fore-cabin, on the day of his arrival in port, the carpenter having obeyed his summons.

“ Well, Mr. Cheeks, what are the carpenters about ?”

“ Weston and Smallbridge, are going on with the chairs—the whole of them will be finished to-morrow.”

“ Well ?”

“ Smith is about the chest of drawers, to match the one in my Lady Capperbar’s bedroom.”

“ Very good. And what is Hilton about ?”

“ He has finished the spare-leaf of the dining-table, Sir ; he is now about a little job for the second-lieutenant.

“ A job for the second-lieutenant, Sir ? How often have I told you, Mr. Cheeks, that the carpenters are not to be employed, except on ship’s duty, without my special permission.”

“ His standing bed place is broke, Sir ; he is only getting out a chock or two.”

“ Mr. Cheeks, you have disobeyed my most positive orders.—By the by, Sir, I understand you were not sober, last night.”

“Please your honour,” replied the carpenter,
“I wasn’t drunk—I was only a little fresh.”

“Take you care, Mr. Cheeks. Well, now,
what are the rest of your crew about?”

“Why, Thompson and Waters are cutting
out the pales for the garden, out of the jib-
boom; I’ve saved the heel to return.”

“Very well, but there won’t be enough, will
there?”

“No, Sir, it will take a hand-mast to finish
the whole.”

“Then we must expend one when we go out
again. We can carry away a top-mast, and
make a new one out of the hand-mast, at sea.
In the meantime, if the sawyers have nothing
to do, they may as well cut the palings at once.
And now, let me see—oh! the painters must go
on shore, to finish the attics.”

“Yes, Sir, but my Lady Capperbar wishes
the *jealowsees* to be painted vermilion: she
says, it will look more rural.”

"Mrs. Capperbar ought to *know enough* about ship's stores, by this time, to be aware that we are only allowed three colours. She may choose or mix them as she pleases ; but as for going to the expense of buying paint, I can't afford it. What are the rest of the men about?"

"Repairing the second cutter, and making a new mast for the pinnace."

"By the by—that puts me in mind of it—have you expended any boat's masts?"

"Only the one carried away, Sir."

"Then you must expend two more. Mrs. C—— has just sent me off a list of a few things that she wishes made, while we are at anchor, and I see two poles for clothes-lines. Saw off the sheave-holes, and put two pegs through at right angles—you know how I mean."

"Yes, Sir. What am I to do, Sir, about the cucumber frame? My Lady Capperbar says that she must have it, and I haven't

glass enough—they grumbled at the yard last time.”

“Mrs. C—— must wait a little. What are the armourers about?”

“They have been so busy with your work, Sir, that the arms are in a very bad condition. The first-lieutenant said yesterday that they were a disgrace to the ship.”

“Who dared say that?”

“The first-lieutenant, Sir.”

“Well, then, let them rub up the arms, and let me know when they are done, and we’ll get the forge up.”

“The armourer has made six rakes, and six hoes, and the two little hoes for the children; but he says that he can’t make a spade.”

“Then I’ll take his warrant away, by Heavens, since he does not know his duty. That will do, Mr. Cheeks. I shall overlook your being in liquor, this time; but take care—send the boatswain to me.”

"Yes, Sir," and the carpenter quitted the cabin.

"Well, Mr. Hurley," said the captain, as the boatswain stroked down his hair, as a mark of respect, when he entered the cabin, "are the cots all finished?"

"All finished your honour, and slung, except the one for the *babby*. Had not I better get a piece of duck for that?"

"No, no—number seven will do as well; Mrs. C—— wants some *fearnought*, to put down in the entrance hall."

"Yes, your honour."

"And some cod-lines laid up for clothes-lines."

"Yes, your honour."

"Stop, let me look at my list—'Knife-tray, meat-screen, leads for window-sashes.'—Ah! have you any hand-leads not on charge?"

"Yes, your honour, four or five."

"Give them to my steward.—'Small chair for

Ellen—canvas for veranda.'—Oh ! here's something else—have you any painted canvas ?”

“Only a waist-hammock-cloth, Sir, ready fitted.”

“We must expend that ; ‘no old on charge.’ Send it on shore to the cottage, and I shall want some pitch.”

“We’ve lots of that, your honour.”

“That will do, Mr. Hurley ; desire the sentry to tell my steward to come here.”

“Yes, your honour.” (Exit boatswain, and enter steward.)

This personage belonged to the party of marines, who had been drafted into the ship—for Captain Capperbar’s economical propensities would not allow him to hire a servant brought up to the situation, who would have demanded wages, independent of the ship’s pay. Having been well drilled at barracks, he never answered any question put to him by an officer without recovering himself from his usual “stand at ease,” position—throwing shoulders

back, his nose up in the air, his arms down his sides, and the palms of his hands flattened on his thighs. His replies were given with all the brevity that the question would admit, or rapid articulation on his own part would enable him to confer.

“Thomas, are the sugar and cocoa ready to go on shore?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Don’t forget to send that letter to Mr. Gibson, for the ten dozen port and sherry.”

“No, Sir.”

“When it comes on board, you’ll bring it on shore, a dozen at a time, in the hair trunk.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Mind you don’t let any of the hay peep outside.”

“No, Sir.”

“Has the cooper finished the washing-tubs?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“And the small kids?”

“No, Sir.”

"Have you inquired among the ship's company for a gardener?"

"Yes, Sir, there's a marine kept the garden of the major in the barracks."

"Don't forget to bring him on shore."

"No, Sir."

"Recollect, too, that Mrs. Capperbar wants some vinegar—the boatswain's is the best—and a gallon or two of rum—and you must corn some beef. The harness cask may remain on shore, and the cooper must make me another."

"Yes, Sir."

"Master Henry's trousers—are they finished yet?"

"No, Sir, Spriggs is at them now. Bailly and James are making Miss Ellen's petticoats."

"And the shoes for Master John—are they finished?"

"Yes, Sir."

"And Master Henry's?"

"No, Sir. Wilson says that he has lost Master Henry's measure."

"Careless scoundrel ; he shall have four-water grog for a week ; and, steward, take three bags of bread on shore, and forty pounds of flour."

"Yes, Sir."

"That's all.—Oh, no—don't forget to send some peas on shore for the pig."

"No, Sir," and the steward departed to execute his variety of commissions.

The present first-lieutenant of the *Aspasia*, who, upon the promotion of the former, had been selected by Captain M—— previous to his quitting the ship, was an excellent officer, and pleasant light-hearted messmate, very superior in talent and information to the many.

The conduct of Captain Capperbar was a source of annoyance to him, as he frequently could not command the services of the different artificers when they were required for the ship. He had, however, been long enough in the ser-

vice to be aware that it was better to make the best of it, than to create enemies by impeaching the conduct of his superior officer. As the command of Captain Capperbar was but temporary, he allowed him to proceed without expostulation, contenting himself with turning his conduct into a source of conversation and amusement.

“ Well, Prose, how do you like the new skipper ?” inquired Seymour, soon after his arrival on board.

“ Why—I do declare, I can hardly tell. He’s a very good-tempered man ; but he don’t exactly treat us midshipmen as if we were officers or gentlemen ; and as for his wife she is really too bad. I am sent every day on shore to the cottage, because I belong to the captain’s gig. They never ask me to sit down, but set me to work some how or another—the other day he had a boat’s crew on shore, digging up a piece of ground for planting potatoes, and he first

shewed me how to cut the *eyes*, and then gave me a knife, and ordered me to *finish the whole bag* which lay in the field, and to see that the men worked properly at the same time. I never cut potatoes into little bits before, except at table after they were boiled."

"Well, that was too bad ; but, however, you'll know how to plant potatoes in future—there's nothing like knowledge."

"And then he sends the nurse and children for an airing, as he calls it, on the water, and I am obliged to take them. I don't like pulling maid servants about."

"That's quite a matter of taste, Prose ; some midshipmen *do*."

"What do you think Mrs. Capperbar asked me to do the other day ?"

"I'm sure I can't guess."

"Why, to shell peas."

"Well, did you oblige her ?"

"Why, yes, I did ; but I did not like it,—

and the other day the captain sent me out to walk with the nurse and children, that I might carry Master Henry, if he was tired."

"They have observed the versatility of your genius."

"She made me hunt the hedges for a whole morning after eggs, because she was convinced that one of the hens laid astray."

"Did you find any?"

"No, and when I came back to tell her so, she got into a rage, and threatened to make the captain flog me."

"The devil she did!"

"A devil she is," continued Prose. "She runs about the house—'Captain Capperbar' this,—'Captain Capperbar,' that—'I will'—'I will not'—'I insist'—'I am determined.' But," continued Prose, "as you belonged to the captain's gig before, you will of course take her again, and I shall be very glad to give the charge up to you."

"Not for the world, my dear Prose: what

may insure your promotion would be my ruin. I never nursed a child or shelled a pea in my life ; the first I should certainly let fall, and the second I probably should eat for my trouble. So pray continue at your post of honour, and I will go for the fresh beef every morning as you were accustomed to do when we were last in port."

Captain M—— did not receive the immediate benefit which he had anticipated from a return to his native land. Bath, Cheltenham, Devonshire, and other places were recommended one after the other by the physicians, until he was tired of moving from place to place. It was nearly two years before he felt his health sufficiently re-established to resume the command of the *Aspasia*, during which period, the patience of his officers was nearly exhausted : and not only was all the furniture and fitting up of the cottage complete, but Captain Capperbar had provided himself with a considerable stock of materials for repairs and alterations. At last

a letter from the captain to Macallan gave the welcome intelligence that he was to be down at Portsmouth in a few days, and that the ship was ordered to fit for foreign service.

We must not omit to mention here, that during these two years Seymour had been able to procure frequent leave of absence, which was invariably passed at the M^cElvinas: and that the terms of intimacy on which he was received at the hall, and his constant intercourse with Emily, produced an effect which a more careful mother would have guarded against. The youth of eighteen and the girl of sixteen had feelings very different from those which had actuated them on their first acquaintance: and Seymour who was staying at the M^cElvinas when the expected arrival of Captain M—— was announced, now felt what pain it would be to part with Emily. The intelligence was communicated in a letter from Prose, when he was sitting alone with M^cElvina, and the bare idea of separation struck him to the heart.

M^cElvina, who had often expressed his opinion on the subject to his wife, had been anxious that our hero should be sent on a foreign station, before he had allowed a passion to take so deep a root in his heart that, to eradicate it, would be a task of great effort and greater pain. Aware, from the flushed face of Seymour, of what was passing within, he quietly introduced the subject, by observing that, in all probability, his favourite, Emily, would be married previous to his return—pointing out that an heiress of so large a property would have a right to expect to unite herself with one in the highest rank of society.

Seymour covered his face with his hands, as he leant over the table. He had no secrets from M^cElvina, and acknowledged the truth of the observation. “I have brought up the subject, my dear boy,” continued M^cElvina; “because I have not been blind, and I am afraid that you will cherish a feeling which can only end in disappointment. She is a sweet girl; but you

must, if possible, forget her. Reflect a moment. You are an orphan, without money, and without family, although not without friends, which you have secured by your own merit; and you have only your courage and your abilities to advance you in the service. Can it, then, be expected, that her parents would consent to an union—or would it be honourable in you, to take any advantage of her youthful prepossession in your favour, and prevent her from reaping those advantages that her fortune and family entitle her to?”

Seymour felt bitterly the justice of the remark; a few tears trickled through his fingers, but his mind was resolved. He had thought to have declared his love before his departure, and have obtained an acknowledgment on her part; but he now made a firm resolution to avoid and to forget her. “I shall follow your advice, my dear Sir, for it is that of a friend who is careful of my honour; but if you knew the state of mind that I am in!—How foolish and incon-

siderate have I been!—I will not see her again.”

“Nay, that would be acting wrongly; it would be quite unpardonable, after the kindness which you have received from Mrs. Rainscourt, not to call and wish them farewell. You must do it, Seymour. It will be an exertion, I acknowledge; but, if I mistake not his character, not too great a one for William Seymour. Good night, my dear boy.”

On the ensuing morning, Seymour, who had fortified himself in his good resolutions, walked to the hall to announce his approaching departure on foreign service, and to take his farewell, his last farewell, of Emily. He found the carriage at the door, and Mrs. Rainscourt in her pelisse and bonnet, about to pay a visit at some distance. She was sorry at the information, for Seymour was a great favourite, and delayed her departure for a quarter of an hour to converse with him; at the end of which, Emily, who had been walking, came into the library. Communicating

the intelligence to her daughter, Mrs. Rainscourt then bade him farewell, and expressing many wishes for his health and happiness, was handed by him into the carriage, and drove off, leaving Seymour to return to the library, and find himself—the very position he had wished to avoid—alone with Emily.

Emily Rainscourt was, at this period, little more than sixteen years old; but it is well known that, in some families, as in some countries, the advance to maturity is much more rapid than in others. Such was the case with our heroine, who, from her appearance, was generally supposed to be at least two years older than she really was, and in her mind she was even more advanced than in her person.

Seymour returned to the library, where he found Emily upon the sofa. Her bonnet had been thrown off, and the tears that were coursing down her cheeks, were hastily brushed away at his entrance. He perceived it, and felt his case to be still more embarrassing.

“When do you go, William?” said Emily, first breaking silence.

“To-morrow morning. I have called to return my thanks to your mother, and to you for your kindness to me;—I shall ever remember it with gratitude.”

Emily made no answer, but a deep sigh escaped.

“I shall,” continued Seymour, “be away perhaps for years, and it is doubtful if ever we meet again. Our tracks in life are widely different. I am an orphan, without name or connection—or even home, except through the kindness of my friends; they were right when, in my childhood, they christened me the “King’s Own,” for I belong to nobody else. You, Miss Rainscourt” (Emily started, for it was the first time, that he had ever called her so, after the first week of their acquaintance), “with every advantage which this world can afford, will soon be called into society, in which I never can have any pretence to enter.

You will, in all probability, form a splendid connection before (if ever) we meet again. You have my prayers, and shall have them, when seas divide us, for your happiness."

Seymour was so choked by his feelings, that he could say no more—and Emily burst into tears.

"Farewell, Emily! God in Heaven bless you," said Seymour, recovering his self-possession.

Emily, who could not speak, offered her hand. Seymour could not controul himself; he pressed her lips with fervour, and darted out of the room.

Emily watched him, until he disappeared at the winding of the avenue, and then sat down and wept bitterly. She thought that he was unkind, when he ought to have been most fond—on the eve of a protracted absence. He might have staid a little longer. He had never behaved so before, and she retired to her room, with her heart panting with anguish and disap-

pointment. She felt how much she loved him, and the acknowledgment was embittered by the idea that this feeling was not reciprocal.

The next morning, when the hour had passed at which Seymour had stated that he was to leave the spot, Emily bent her steps to the cottage, that she might, by conversation with her friend Mrs. McElvina, obtain, if possible, some clue to the motives which had induced our hero to behave as we have narrated.

Susan was equally anxious to know in what manner Seymour had conducted himself, and soon obtained from Emily the information which she required. She then pointed out to her, as her husband had done to Seymour, the improbability, if not impossibility, of any happy result to their intimacy, and explained the honourable motives by which Seymour had been actuated,—the more commendable, as his feelings on the subject were even more acute than her own.

The weeping girl felt the truth of her re-

marks, as far as the justification of Seymour was attempted. Satisfied with the knowledge that he loved her, she paid little attention to the more prudent part of the advice, and made a resolution in his favour, which, as well as her attachment (unlike most others formed during the freshness of the heart), through time and circumstance, absence on his part, temptations on hers, continued stedfast and immoveable to the last.

CHAPTER II.

First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parent's tears ;
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard.

MILTON.

ONCE more the Aspasia flew upon the wings
of the northern gale, to secure her country's
dominion over far distant seas ; and many an
anxious eye, that dwelt upon the receding
shore, and many an aching heart, that felt
itself severed from home and its endearments,
did she carry away in her rapid flight. Some
there were, to whom the painful reflection pre-

sented itself—" Shall I e'er behold those cherished shores again?"

This, however, was but a transitory feeling, soon chased away by Hope, who delights to throw her sunny beams on the distance, while she leaves the foreground to the dark reality of life. All felt deeply, but there was none whose mental sufferings could be compared with those of Seymour.

Captain M—— opened his sealed orders, and found that he was directed to proceed forthwith to the East-Indies. He had been prepared for this, by indirect hints given to him by the First Lord of the Admiralty. There is nothing so tedious as making a passage, and, of all others, that to the East-Indies is the most disagreeable, especially at the time of which we are writing, when Sir H. Popham had not added the Cape of Good Hope to the colonial grandeur of the country,—so that, in fact, there was no resting place for the wanderer, tired with the unvarying monotony of

sky and water. We shall, therefore, content ourselves with stating, that, at the end of three months, his Majesty's ship *Aspasia* dropped her anchor in *Kedgerie Roads*, and the captain of the same pilot schooner, who had taken charge of her off the *Sand-heads*, was put in requisition to convey Captain M—— and his despatches up to *Calcutta*. *Courtenay*, *Macallan*, and *Seymour*, were invited to be of the party ; and the next morning, they shifted on board the pilot schooner, and commenced the ascent of the magnificent and rapid *Hoogly*.

The pilot captain, who, like all those who ply in this dangerous and intricate navigation, had been brought up to it from his youth, was a tall gaunt personage, of about fifty years of age, and familiar in his manner. Whether he had found some difficulty in keeping in check the passengers from the *Indiamen*, who he had been in the habit of taking up to *Calcutta*, (whose spirits were, in all probability, rather buoyant upon their first release from the confinement of

a tedious passage), or whether from a disposition naturally afraid of encroachment, he was incessantly informing you that "he was captain of his own ship." Although in all other parts, he was polite, yet upon this he paid no respect to persons, as the governor general and his staff, much to their amusement, and occasionally to their annoyance, found to be the case, when they ascended the river, under his charge.

"Happy to see you on board, Captain M——. Hope you will make yourself comfortable, and call for every thing you want. Boy, take this trunk down into the state cabin. Happy to see you, gentlemen, and beg you will consider yourselves quite at home—at the same time beg to observe that I'm '*Captain of my own ship.*' "

"So you ought to be," replied Captain M——, smiling, "if your ship was no larger than a nutshell. I'm captain of *my* own ship, I can assure you."

"Very glad we agree upon that point, Cap-

tain M——. Young gentleman," continued he, addressing himself to Courtenay, "you'll oblige me by not coming to an anchor on my hen-coops. If you wish to sit down, you can call for a chair."

"Rather annoying," muttered Courtenay, who did not much like being called "young gentleman."

"A chair for the young gentleman," continued the captain of the schooner. "Starboard a little. Mr. Jones—there is rather too much cable out, till the tide makes stronger. I presume you are not used to *kedging*, captain. It's a very pretty thing, as you will acknowledge. Starboard yet. Give her the helm quick, Mr. Thompson. Why, Sir, do you know that I was once very nearly on shore on the tail of this very bank, because a young lady, who was going up to Calcutta, would take the helm. The mate could not prevent her; she refused to let it go, and, when I commanded her, told me, with a laugh, that she could steer as well as

I could. I was obliged to prove to her, in rather an unpleasant manner, that I was captain of my own ship."

" ' Why, you did not flog her, did you, captain ?' "

" Why, no, not exactly that, but I was obliged to jerk the wheel round so quick, that I sprained both her wrists before she had time to let it go. It very near produced a mutiny. The girl fainted, or pretended to do so, and all the gentlemen passengers were in high wrath—little thinking, the fools, that I had saved their lives by what they called my barbarity. However, I told them, as soon as the danger was over, that I was captain of my own ship. Sweet, pretty girl too,—she was. We were within an inch of the bank, the tide running like a sluice, and should have turned the turtle, the moment that we had struck. Such a thing as carrying politeness too far. If I had not twisted the wheel out of her hands as I did, in two minutes more the alligators would have divided her pretty

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carcass, and all the rest of us to boot. No occasion for that, Captain M——. There's plenty of black fellows for them floating up and down all day-long, as you will see."

"They throw all the dead into the river, do they not?"

"All, Sir. This is a continuation of the sacred river, the Ganges, and they believe that it insures their going to Heaven. Have you never been in India before, Sir?"

"Never."

"Nor these three gentlemen?"

"Neither of them."

"Oh, then," cried the captain, his face brightening up at the intelligence, as it gave him an opportunity of indulging in his long stories, and at the same time of amusing his passengers; "then, perhaps, you would not object to my explaining things to you as we go along?"

"On the contrary, we shall feel much indebted to you."

“Observe,” said the captain, looking round as if to find an object to decide him where to begin—“do you see that body floating down the river, with the crow perched upon it, and that black thing flush with the water’s edge, which nears it so fast—that’s the head of an alligator ; he is in chase of it.”

The party directed their attention to the object ; the alligator, which had the appearance of a piece of black wood floating down the stream, closed with the body, his upper jaw rose clear out of the water, and descended upon his prey, with which he immediately disappeared under the muddy water.

“By the Lord, Mr. Crow, but you’d a narrow chance then,” observed the captain ; “you may thank your stars that you did not lose your life as well as your breakfast. Don’t you think so, young gentleman,” continued the captain, addressing Courtenay.

“I think,” observed Courtenay, “that Mr.

Crow was not exactly captain of his own ship."

"Very true, Sir. That point of land which we are just shutting in, Captain M——, is the end of Saugor Island, famous for Bengal tigers, and more famous once for the sacrifice of children. You have heard of it?"

"I have heard of it; but if you have ever witnessed the scene, I shall be obliged by your narration."

"I did once, Captain M——, but nothing would ever induce me to witness it again. I am very glad that government has put a stop to it by force. You are aware that the custom arose from the natives attempting to avert any present or anticipated calamity, by voting a child to propitiate the deity. On a certain day they all assembled in boats, with their victims, attended by their priests and music, and decorated with flowers. The gaiety of the procession would have induced you to imagine that it was

some joyous festival, instead of a scene of superstition and of blood. It would almost have appeared as if the alligators and sharks were aware of the exact time and place, from the numbers that were collected at the spot where the immolation took place. My blood curdles now when I think of it. The cries of the natives, the shouting and encouraging of the priests, the deafening noise of the tom-toms, mixed with the piercing harsh music of the country, the hurling and tossing of the poor little infants into the water, and the splashing and contention of the ravenous creatures as they tore them limb from limb, within a few feet of their unnatural parents—the whole sea tinged with blood, and strewn with flowers ! The very remembrance is sickening to me.

“One circumstance occurred, more horrid than all the rest. A woman had devoted her child—but she had the feelings of a mother, which were not to be controuled by the blindest superstition. From time to time she had post-

poned the fulfilment of the vow, until the child had grown into a woman—for she was thirteen years old, which in this country is the marriageable age. Misfortune came on, and the husband was told by the priests that the deity was offended, and that the daughter must be sacrificed, or he would not be appeased. She was a beautiful creature for a native, and was to have been married about the very time that she was now to be sacrificed. I see her now—she was dark in complexion, as they all are, but her features were beautifully small and regular, and her form was perfect symmetry. They took off the gold ornaments, with which she was decorated, and, in their avarice, removed her garments, as she implored and intreated on her knees in vain. The boat that she was in, was closer to the shore than the others, and in shallow water. They forced her over the gunnel—she alighted on her feet, the water being up to her middle, and, by a miracle,

escaped, before a shark or alligator could reach her, and gained the beach. I thought that she was saved, and felt more happy than if I had received a sack of rupees. But no—they landed from the boat, and pushed her into the water with long poles, while she screamed for pity. A large alligator swam up to her, and she fell senseless with fright, just before he received her in his jaws. So I don't think the poor creature suffered much after that, although the agony of anticipation must have been worse than the reality. That one instance affected me more than the scores of infants that were sacrificed to Moloch."

Distressing as the narrative was, there was a novelty and interest in it, and a degree of feeling unexpectedly shewn by the captain of the pilot vessel, that raised him in the opinion of Captain M——, who became anxious to obtain further information.

"They consider the river as sacred—do you

imagine that they consider the alligators to be so?"

"I rather think that they do, Sir, although I only judge from what I have seen, as I have read nothing about it. At all events, the presence of an alligator will not prevent them from performing a customary duty of their religion, which is bathing in the sacred river. The people come down to bathe at the different ghauts, and if an alligator takes one of them down, it will not prevent the others from returning the next morning, even if one was to be taken away each succeeding day. I rather think that, in the discharge of a sacred duty, they consider all accidents of this kind as according to the will of the deity, and a sort of passport to heaven. A party of murderous villains turned this feeling of their countrymen to good account, at a ghaut up the country. The natives had bathed there for centuries without any accident on record, when, one day, a woman disappeared under the

water, from amongst the rest, and every day for many weeks the same untoward circumstance occurred. It was supposed to be an alligator—but it was afterwards ascertained, that this party of thieves had concealed themselves in the jungle, on the opposite side of the river, which at that part was deep, but not very wide, and had a rope with a hook to it, extended under water to the ghaut, where the people bathed. Some of the gang mingled with the bathers, and slipping down under water, made the rope fast to the legs of one of the women, who was immediately hauled under the water by his comrades, concealed on the opposite side. You may be wondering why the rascals took so much trouble; but, Sir, the women of this country, especially those of high caste, and who are rich, wear massive gold bangles upon their arms and legs, besides ornaments of great value on other parts of their person, and they never take them off, when they bathe, as they are fastened on so as not

to be removed. It was from the observation, that this supposed alligator was very nice in his eating, as he invariably took away a Brachmany, or a Rajahpoot girl, that the plot was discovered. We are now abreast of the Diamond Harbour, a sad unhealthy place, I can assure you. Port a little, Mr. Jones—give five or six fathoms more cable, we drag too fast. This is a very dangerous corner that we are turning now. When we are about eight miles above, we shall bring up, and go to dinner. I beg your pardon, young gentleman, but I'll thank you to leave the compasses alone. You'll excuse me, but I command this vessel."

The pilot schooner rounded the point in safety, and in less than an hour brought up abreast of a large village. The captain stated, that before dinner was over, the tide would be too slack to go further on, and that he should remain there during the ebb, and not weigh till early the next morning. If, therefore, Captain M—— and the gentlemen felt inclined to take

a stroll after dinner, a boat was at their service.

This was gladly assented to, and when dinner was over, the captain of the schooner ordered the boat to be manned, and, at the request of Captain M——, accompanied them on shore. On their landing, the flocking together of the inhabitants, and the noise of the music, announced that something more than usual was going on. On inquiry, the pilot captain informed them, that the rajah of the village, who had ascended the river to perform his vows at some distant shrine, had not returned at the time that he was expected, and that the natives were afraid that some accident had occurred, and were in consequence propitiating the deity.

“You will now have an opportunity of beholding a very uncommon sight, which is the propitiatory dance to Shivre. There is no occasion for hurrying on so fast, young gentleman,” continued the captain to Courtenay; “they will continue it till midnight.”

“How excessively annoying that ‘captain of his own ship’ is,” observed Courtenay to Macallan. “‘Young gentleman!’ As if he could not see my epaulet.”

“And yet there is nothing particularly to be affronted about. You *have* a very youthful appearance, and surely you are not displeased at being called a gentleman.”

“Why, no; but that is the reason why I am annoyed, because I cannot take it up.”

The party soon arrived at the site of the performance, which was on a small arena at the foot of a pagoda. The pagoda, which was not large, was evidently of very antient date, and the carvings in bas-relief, which were continued round on its sides, representing processions in honour of the deity, were of a description much superior to the general execution of the Hindoos. The summit had bowed to time; perishable art had yielded to eternal nature—a small tree, of the acacia species, had usurped its place, and as it waved its graceful bows to

the breeze, appeared like a youthful queen reigning over and protecting the various shrubs and plants, which luxuriated in the different crevices of the building.

The dance was performed by about fifteen men, who were perfectly naked, their long hair falling below their waists. They went through a variety of rapid and strange evolutions, with a remarkable degree of precision, throwing about their hands and arms, and distorting their bodies, even to their fingers, in a dexterous and almost terrific manner.

Sometimes they would suddenly form a circle, and, with a simultaneous jerk of their heads, throw their long hair, so that the ends would for a moment all meet together in the centre ; at other times, rolling their heads upon their shoulders with such astonishing velocity, that the eye was dazzled as they flew round and round, their hair radiating and diverging like the thrumbings of a mop, when trundled by some strong-limbed housemaid. Their motions

were regulated by the tom-toms, while an old Brahmin, with a ragged white beard, sat perched over the door of the pagoda, and, with a small piece of bamboo, struck upon the palm of his left hand, as he presided over the whole ceremony. After a few minutes of violent exertion, he gave the signal to stop, and the performers, reeking with perspiration from every pore, bound up their wet hair over their foreheads, and made room for another set, who repeated the same evolutions.

“Is this religion?” inquired Seymour of Macallan, with some astonishment.

“That is a difficult question to answer in few words. We must hope that it will be accepted as such, for its votaries are, at least, sincere.”

“Oh! no one can deny the *warmth* of their devotion,” observed Courtenay, drily.

The extreme heat and effluvia from the crowds of natives, who witnessed the performance, forced Captain M—— and his compa-

nions unwillingly to abandon a scene so novel to an European. At the proposal of their conductor, they agreed to continue their walk to the outskirts of the village.

“ I have often been ashore at this village,” said the captain, “ for they make the small mats here which are much in request at Calcutta, and I have frequent commissions for them. I can shew you a novelty, if you wish, but I warn you that it will not be a very agreeable sight. The nullah that runs up here, frequently leaves the dead bodies on the bank. It is now half-ebb, and if you wish to be introduced to vultures and jackals, I can shew you plenty. But prepare yourselves for a disgusting sight, for these animals do not congregate without a cause.”

“ To prey on the dead bodies, I presume ?” replied Captain M—— ; “ but as I have never seen these animals in their wild state, my curiosity bears down any anticipation of disgust.

Let me not, however, influence those who do not feel inclined to encounter it."

"After witnessing that dance," observed Courtenay, taking a pinch of snuff, "I am fully prepared for *any supper*—it is impossible to be more disgusting."

Macallan and Seymour having expressed a wish to proceed, the pilot captain led the way : observing,—“ These animals are very necessary in the climates to which they are indigenous ; they do the duty on shore which the alligators do in the water—that of public scavengers. The number of bodies that are launched into the Ganges is incredible. If a Hindoo is sick, he is brought down to the banks by his relatives, and if he does not recover, is thrown into the river. It is said, indeed, that if they are known to have money, their relatives do not wait till nature tires with her own exertions, but stop their mouths with clay, to prevent the possibility of recovery. There is a strong eddy

round this point, and the bodies are swept into the nullah, and lie dry at the ebb."

"What do you call a nullah?" inquired Seymour.

"A nullah means a creek."

"I was so stupidly proud that I did not like to ask ; but as Seymour has set the example," added Courtenay, "pray what is a ghaut?"

"A landing place. See, there are some vultures perched upon that tree," continued the pilot captain, as they ascended the bank of the nullah. As soon as they arrived at the top, they perceived, to their horror, seven or eight bodies lying in the mud, surrounded by vultures and jackals who, indiscriminately mingled together, were devouring them.

As they approached, the jackals retreated, looking repeatedly back, and sometimes facing round to the party, as if to inquire why they disturbed them in their repast. The vultures, on the contrary, did not attempt to move, until Macallan approached within a few feet,

and then those who could retired a few yards, or took their stations on the low branches of a tree close by, where others, who were already satiated, were sitting with drooping wings, waiting for a return of appetite to recommence their banquet; others were so gorged, that they could not walk away. With their wings, trailing in the mud, and their beaks separated, as if gasping for breath, their brilliant eye dulled from repletion—there they remained, emitting an effluvium so offensive that the numerous skeletons, and the mingled remains of mortality, were pleasing, compared to such disgusting specimens of *living* corruption.

The party viewed the scene for a minute or two without speaking, and then turned away by common consent, and did not break silence until they had left it far behind.

“I begin to think,” said Courtenay, taking out his box, “that even a savage may occasionally have an excuse for taking snuff. Did you ever, in your whole life, come in contact

with such a stench? Positively it has impregnated my snuff. There's a strong twang of the vulture in it," continued he, emptying the contents of the box upon the ground. "Now that's what I consider cursedly annoying."

"We have, indeed, both seen and heard enough for one day," observed Captain M——, as they entered the boat. "Many thanks to you, Mr. ——, for your attention to our wishes."

"Not at all, Captain M——. I am only sorry that my sights have not been as agreeable as they are novel; but when you arrive at Calcutta, you will find novelty combined with pleasure."

After three days, which appeared to have fled with extra rapidity, from the constant amusement derived from the anecdotes and information imparted by the pilot captain, they sailed up Garden Reach with a fine breeze; and the city of palaces, the only one that deserves its

name, burst, in all its splendour, upon their sight.

But I am not about to describe it; reader, do not be alarmed. It is not in my province as a novel writer, and I make it a rule never to interfere with anybody else, if I can avoid it. Captain Hall, who has already *done* North and South America, and Loo Choo, will, I have no doubt, be here by and by, taking Africa in his way: and as I can make up my three volumes of fiction without trespassing upon his matter of fact, I refer you to his work when it appears, for a description of this gorgeous monument of rapine, this painted sepulchre of crime.

CHAPTER III.

The unwieldy Elephant,
To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed
His lithe proboscis.

MILTON.

CAPTAIN M—— remained but a few days at Calcutta, where he perceived little difference between the society and that of England, remarking only, that the gentlemen were more hospitable, and the ladies drank more beer. But I am trespassing, notwithstanding my promise to the contrary, at the end of the last chapter. I will therefore be off at once, before I am de-

cidedly guilty of a breach of faith. The *Aspasia's* orders were to join the admiral, who had quitted the Bay of Bengal, and proceeded to Bombay, to avoid the monsoon, which was about to set in; and as there was no time to be lost, Captain M—— did not touch at Madras, but made all possible haste to gain the tranquil side of the Peninsula. The governor-general had requested that he would call at Travancore, to deliver a letter and complimentary present to the reigning queen, who held her possessions tributary to our government.

The *Aspasia* anchored off the town, and was shortly afterwards boarded by one of the ministers of the queen, a venerable mussulman, who brought a boat-load of compliments and vegetables. He was accompanied by one or two others, among whom was a very indifferent interpreter. Captain M——, who was anxious to join the admiral, excused himself, on the plea of ill health, from delivering the present and letter in person, and expressed his wish to the

deputy that he would take them in charge, stating, that his services were required elsewhere ; he requested that an answer to the letter might be sent on board as soon as possible. This was explained through the interpreter, and Captain M—— then inquired what time would probably elapse before the answer would be sent. The reply was, in a week, or ten days.

“ Ask him,” said Captain M——, impatiently, “ whether it cannot be sent to-morrow morning, as I am anxious to proceed ?”

After an exchange of several sentences between the interpreter and the deputy, who observed the most imperturbable gravity, the former replied to Captain M——.

“ He say no, Sar. Little people, like you and me, write letter very quick, all in one minute. Great people, like king and queen, not possible write letter less than week or ten day. Not fashion this country, Sar.”

The presents being placed in the boat, and the letter presented on a silver salver, the de-

puty made a low salaam, and departed. Captain M——, aware that all attempts to hasten them would be useless, made no further remarks on the subject. The next morning the same grave personage came on board, attended by the interpreter and his suite; with many compliments from their royal mistress, who had sent a present for the captain. During the time of the delivery, and interpretation of the message, the natives, who rowed in his boat, handed up a large black monkey, with a long white beard extending over his chin and shoulders.

The animal, who did not seem well pleased with his change of situation, and who was naturally of a vicious temperament, flew round and round the length of his tether, catching at the trowsers of the sailors with his paws and teeth, and using the latter without the least ceremony.

“Queen say, Sar,—Many compliments, and tell you it very *high caste* monkey—very *high caste* indeed, Sar,—very fine present, Sar.”

"It may be," observed Captain M—— to the first-lieutenant; "but I wish she had saved herself the trouble. I must not refuse it; and what can we do with the brute?"

"It will amuse the men, Sir; he seems to have plenty of devil in him."

"Oh!" roared Prose, "I do declare he has bit a piece out of my leg. High caste, indeed. I should like to give him a *high caste* overboard."

"Really, Prose, that's not so bad," observed Seymour. "Jerry was correct in his assertion that you had plenty of wit, only it required strong measures to extract it from you."

"Queen say, Sar, write letter in five or six days, and say, suppose Captain Saib and officers come on shore, order every body go hunt tiger. Queen tell people make every thing proper. Very fine tiger hunt, Sar."

Captain M——, who was convinced that he must patiently await their own time, did not expostulate at the delay. Not wishing to avail

himself of the offer, he requested the officers would consider themselves at liberty to accept the invitation, which was intended as a compliment, and therefore ought not to be refused.

A large party was formed, who, on the ensuing day, accompanied by the deputy and his suite, and provided with fowling-pieces and musquets, landed at the town, where they were received by a few tom-toms, and some hundreds of spectators. On their arrival at a house which had been prepared for their reception, they found a splendid breakfast awaiting them, to which they did as ample justice as a celebrated traveller to that which welcomed him at New York, although they did not, like him, revel to satiety, by plunging into oceans of tea and coffee.

Again the talents of the interpreter were called into action, to explain the reason why her majesty could not receive them, which he did by laying his hand across what medical men would term the abdominal region (or, as Mrs.

Ramsbottom would have said, "her abominable region"), and informing them that the queen was not well there.

The party required no further explanation. They expressed their regrets, finished their breakfast, and then stated themselves ready to proceed.

"Game not come yet, Sar—game not come till to-morrow."

"Well, then, we must go to it," replied Courtenay.

"Ah, gentleman not understand shoot in this country," continued the interpreter, who then, with some difficulty, contrived to make them understand that about four thousand men had been summoned to drive the game close to the town, and that, to ensure a sufficiency of sport, the sweep which they had taken was so great, that they would not close in till the next morning. He added, that as, perhaps, they would like to see the jungle to which the game was to be driven, horses and elephants had been

prepared, and refreshments would be provided at any spot where they might wish to alight.

Macallan, who had provided himself with his hammers, and other implements requisite in the pursuit of his favourite sciences, mineralogy and geology, was not sorry for the delay, and the remainder of the party were satisfied with the idea of a pleasant excursion. Previous to their setting off, a variety of performers were ordered in to amuse them with feats of juggling and address, which would have been acknowledged, if seen in England, to have far surpassed those of the celebrated Ramoo Samee and his associates. Amongst the rest, the majestic attitudes of the dancing snakes particularly attracted the attention of Macallan, who expressed to the interpreter his wish to procure one of the species (the famed cobra di capella), with the fangs not extracted. The interpreter, after a few words with the deputy, informed the doctor, with his usual politeness, "that all the snakes in the country were at the service of the gentle-

man ; but take care not let bite, because very high caste snake."

"What do they mean by calling the animals of the country high caste?" inquired Seymour of Macallan. "I thought it was a term only applied to the Brachmins and Rajah Pouts."

"Both the monkey and the snake are indirectly worshipped by these people," replied the doctor, "as their supposed deities are represented to have assumed these forms. The more vicious, or the more venomous, the higher they rank. The cobra di capella is, I believe, the most venomous serpent that exists."

"I do declare that that monkey deserves his rank," observed Prose. "I can hardly walk, as it is."

"Well, but you can ride, Prose, and here are the horses."

The horses, with three elephants, two with howdahs on their backs, and the other loaded with a large tent, were now paraded before the door ; each horse was attended by his syee, or

groom, who never quitted him, but fanned away the flies with a chouny, or whisk, formed of a horse's tail. They were beautiful animals, but much too spirited for some of the party, who felt alarm at the very anticipation of the difficulty they would have in retaining their seats.

Prose, who had never been twice in his life on the back of any animal, was in sad trepidation; he looked first at the horses, who were plunging and rearing, in the hands of the syees, who could with difficulty restrain their impatience, and then at the elephants, whose stupendous size, flourishing probosces, projecting tusks, and small, keen eyes, equally filled him with dismay.

"I do declare," observed Prose, affecting an extra limp, "my leg is very bad. I think—"

"Come, come, Mr. Prose, no hauling off; no leg-bail, if you please," said Courtenay, who, with Seymour, was already mounted upon a spirited Arabian; "take your choice—but go you must."

"Well, then, if I must, which would you advise me to take?"

"Take a horse," said Seymour, laughing; "of two evils always choose the least."

"Take an elephant, Mr. Prose," cried Courtenay; "his size is double, but he'll give you less trouble."

"Why, that's a rhyme, I do declare; but how shall I get upon his back?"

"Oh! he'll take you up in his trunk, and put you on."

"Indeed he shall not," cried Prose, retreating some paces; "I say, Mr. Interpreter, how am I to get on the top of that great beast?"

"As you please, Sar. Suppose you like get up before, he lift up his leg for you to climb up. Suppose you like to get up behind, he not say nothing. Suppose you wish go up his middle, you ab ladder."

"Well, then, Mr. Interpreter, I shall feel very much obliged to you for a ladder."

A ladder was brought. Prose, and Macallan, with his implements, ascended to the howdah, fixed on the back of the enormous brute. The remainder of the party being ready, they set off, accompanied by the deputy, the interpreter, and several other handsomely attired natives, who, out of compliment to the officers, had been ordered to attend them.

The country, like most parts of India near to the coast, consisted of paddy or rice fields, under water, diversified with intersecting patches of jungle and high trees. Occasionally they passed a deeper pool, where the buffaloes, with only their horns and tips of their noses to be seen, lay, with the whole of their enormous carcasses hid under the muddy water, to defend themselves from the attacks of the mosquitoes, and the powerful rays of the sun.

“Look at the buffaloes, Prose.”

“Where, Seymour? I can’t see any. I never saw a buffalo in my life. It’s like an ox, an’t it?”

"It's very like a whale," replied Courtenay.

At this moment one of the herd, startled at the near approach of the cavalcade, rose from the stagnant pool, where he had been lying, and presented his immense carcass, covered with mud, to Prose's wondering eyes.

"Lord, Molly, what a fish!" exclaimed Courtenay, with affected surprise, alluding to an old standing naval joke.

"Now, is that a fish?" cried Prose, a little alarmed. "Well, I do declare! I say, Mr. Interpreter, what is that thing?"

"Call him buffalo, Sar."

"Well, I do declare! I always thought that buffaloes were animals that lived on shore."

"Nothing like travelling, Mr. Prose," observed Courtenay; "you'll know a buffalo, now, if ever you happen to hook one, when you are fishing out of the fore-chains."

"And you'll remember a high-caste monkey, if ever you meet with one again," added Seymour.

“That I shall, all the days of my life.”

The country, as they proceeded inland, materially altered its features. The ascent was constant, although gentle. Forests of large trees and fragments of rocks met their view, instead of the paddy fields, which they had left behind; and Macallan now wished to descend, that he might collect geological specimens. Explaining his reason, he desired the interpreter to order the elephant to stop.

“Suppose gentleman want stones, elephant give them,” replied the interpreter; “no occasion for Saib to get off:” and explaining the doctor’s wishes to the conductor of the elephant, the knowledge of which occasioned a laugh among the natives, who could not conceive why the doctor should want the stones, he continued, “Now, Sar, you point any stone you want.”

The doctor did so; and the conductor, speaking to the elephant, the proboscis of the sagacious animal immediately handed up the one

pointed out, to his conductor, who passed it to Macallan.

For more than an hour the doctor amused himself with breaking and examining the different specimens presented to him, until he passed by an isolated mass, whose component parts, glittering in the sun, made him anxious to obtain a specimen. It was a large rock, about the size of six elephants, and the doctor pointed to it.

“Ah, Sar!” interrupted the interpreter; “elephant very strong beast, but no lift that.”

“I did not imagine that he would, but I must dismount to examine it,” replied Macallan, gravely, who was absorbed in his scientific pursuits.

The elephant stopped; and the doctor, not aware of the great height, attempted to slip down his side; he succeeded in reaching the ground, not exactly on his feet, to the great amusement of the party. Regardless of trifles, when in pursuit of science, he desired Prose to

throw him down his bag of implements, and proceeded to the object of his investigation, which appeared to him so peculiar, that he requested the others to continue their excursion, and leave him to be picked up on their return.

“ Ah, massa ! like stop this place ? ” said the interpreter.

“ Yes,” replied the doctor.

“ Do you really intend to remain here ? ” inquired Courtenay.

“ I do ; it is a very remarkable specimen of cinnamon stone, and I must procure some of it if possible.”

“ Well, I do declare,” said Prose ; “ I thought cinnamon grew upon trees. Doctor, I should like to stay with you, for this beast does shake me so, I’m quite sore—and I’ve such a stitch in my side.”

Prose accordingly prepared to descend, and was recommended by the interpreter to slide down by the hind leg of the animal.

“ He won’t kick, will he ? ”

"Elephant no kick, Sar," and Prose descended in safety, and joined the doctor, while the remainder of the party continued their excursion.

The doctor walked several times round the rock, to find a point upon which he would be able to make some impression with his implements; but the fragment, which had probably remained there since the deluge, without having been honoured by a visit from a naturalist, was worn quite smooth by time, and presented no acute angle, within reach, upon which his hammer could make any impression; nor could he climb it, for it rose from its base in almost a perpendicular line. The more he scrutinized, the more anxious was he to obtain specimens, and he determined to blast the rock. Being prepared with a couple of short crowbars, and a flask of gunpowder, he fixed upon a corner, which appeared more assailable than the rest, and commenced his laborious occupation.

"Can I assist you, Mr. Macallan?" inquired Prose.

"You can, indeed, Mr. Prose. Now, observe; continue driving the end of the crowbar straight into this hole, until you have made it about nine or ten inches deep; that will be sufficient. I will make another on the other side."

Prose commenced his labour, and, for a few minutes, worked with due emphasis; but he soon found out that he had volunteered to a most fatiguing task. He stopped, at last, for want of breath.

"Well, Mr. Prose," inquired the doctor, from the other side of the rock, observing that he had ceased from his labour, "how do you get on?"

"I wish to heaven I had never got off," muttered Prose, "for this is worse than the elephant."

But the doctor was an enthusiast, a de-

scription of person who never tires, and he judged of others by himself.

“How far have you got now, Mr. Prose?”

“Oh—I think I have got an inch and a half good,” answered Prose, quite exhausted.

“No more !” exclaimed Macallan ; “ why you must work harder, or we never shall blast it.”

“I have been *blasting* it in my heart,” thought Prose, “for these last ten minutes,” and he resumed his labour.

“You know nothing of mineralogy,” inquired the doctor, after a silence of a few minutes.

“This is my first lesson, doctor,” answered Prose, out loud, and muttering, in continuation, “I do declare it shall be the last.”

“It’s a very amusing study,” continued Macallan ; “but, like most others, rather dry at first.”

“Any thing but dry,” thought Prose, wiping his face with his handkerchief.

“I shall be happy to give you any information in my power,” said Macallan ; “but you

must be attentive—nothing is to be obtained without labour.”

“I’m sure mineralogy is not,” retorted Prose, throwing down his crowbar from exhaustion.

Fortunately for Prose, by the directions of the interpreter, the baggage elephant who carried the tent, and the natives accompanying it, now halted opposite to the rock, on the side where Prose was, for the wish expressed by Macallan to remain there had been construed by the interpreter as a selection of the place where the refreshments should be prepared. One of the natives, perceiving what Prose was about when he threw away the crowbar, offered his assistance, which was readily accepted, and the labour was continued.

“Well, Mr. Prose, how do you get on now?”

“Oh!—capitally.”

“Don’t you find it very warm?” continued Macallan, who stopped to wipe the streams of perspiration from his own face.

“Oh, no,” answered Prose, chuckling.

"Well, I do, I can assure you," answered the doctor, who not wishing to show symptoms of flagging, while Prose was working so hard, recommenced his labour.

Another quarter of an hour, and the doctor was quite exhausted; wishing for an excuse to leave off himself, he called again to Prose—

"An't you tired, Mr Prose?"

"Not the least, doctor."

"Oh, but you must be—you had better rest yourself a little."

"Thank you, but I'm not the least tired."

Another five minutes.—"Well, Mr. Prose, I really give you great credit for your perseverance. Let me see how deep you are," said Macallan, who could find no other excuse for being the first to abandon his task.

But Prose, who was not exactly a fool, determined not to lose his credit with the doctor—pushing aside the native, he took the crowbar from him, and before the doctor had walked round, was again hard at work.

"Upon my honour I give you great credit," observed the panting Macallan, as he witnessed the effects of the labour.

"But," observed Prose, "why should we work this way when there are a parcel of black fellows doing nothing? Here, I say, you chap, come and punch here," continued he, pointing at the crowbar to the native, who immediately resumed his labour. "You call another, Mr. Macallan, and make him work for you."

"Well thought of, Mr. Prose," answered the doctor, and another native being put in requisition, in less than an hour the rock was perforated to the depth required, without the least appearance of fatigue, or even heat upon the skins of the temperate Hindoos. In the meantime the tent was erected, the mats and carpets spread, the fires lighted, and the repast preparing by the cooks who were in attendance. The doctor, who was absorbed in his views, heeded it not, and had just finished the charging

and priming of the rock when the cavalcade returned from their excursion.

"Well, doctor, how do you get on?" inquired Courtenay.

"Oh, I'm all ready, and you had better remove to a little distance, as I'm about to fire my trains."

"Fire your trains!—Why what have you been about?"

"I'm going to blast the rock."

"The devil you are—then I'm off," cried Courtenay, who, with Seymour, retreated from the well known effects of gunpowder.

The natives who accompanied them also retired, although not aware of the nature of the operation. The interpreter understood "gentlemen make fireworks," and reported accordingly.

The doctor lighted his matches and withdrew, followed by Prose, who forgot his limp upon this occasion. The mines exploded, split-

ting large fragments from the rock, and shaking it from its base.

“Capital!” exclaimed the doctor, who, as soon as the smoke had cleared away, ran up, and was in ecstasies at the variety and brilliancy of the specimens which were now exposed to his eager view.

But in his enthusiasm the doctor quite overlooked the mischief which he had occasioned. One large fragment had struck the tent to the ground; others had scattered the cooking utensils, with their contents, and wounded the unfortunate cooks; while the affrighted elephant had completed the demolition by trotting over the whole, his trunk raised high in the air, uttering shrill cries, and regardless of the admonitions of his conductor. All was confusion and dismay.

The natives when they witnessed the damage were astonished. A long consultation took place between them, as to what the doctor meant; at

last it was decided by the grave deputy that it was intended as a compliment to them—for all fireworks were compliments in that country. They therefore salaamed with great good humour ; but the English knew better, and commenced a violent attack upon Macallan, who was still absorbed in collecting specimens, and quite unconscious of the mischief which he had created.

“You’ve not only destroyed our dinner,” continued Courtenay, “but you’ve killed three cooks, and wounded seven more.”

“Is it possible !” cried Macallan, with dismay, throwing away his specimens with as much haste as he had seized upon them, and running in the direction of the men reported to be hurt. Fortunately for his peace of mind, Courtenay’s list of killed was all invention, and the wounded were reduced to *two*, which the doctor conscientiously reported under the head of “*slightly*.”

There was no help but to proceed to the town, and wait until another repast could be provided. This was soon done, and the interpreter, with a

double salaam, informed the doctor, that "if gentleman wish blow up another tent, deputy have one ready for him next day."

"Well, now, I do declare these people are very polite," observed Prose; "but I hope that if you do, doctor, you will not make me a party to it. I would never have punched so hard at that hole if I thought that it was to have blown up my own dinner."

"You're right, Mr. Prose," answered Courtenay. "The doctor did not treat us according to the Scriptures. We asked for bread, and he gave us a stone—rather annoying too, after a long ride. But, however, as the game is to come to us to-morrow, we had better be up early to receive it in due form—so good night."

CHAPTER IV.

Now shall ye see
Our Roman hunting.

SHAKSPEARE.

Never did I hear
Such gallant chiding ; for besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, ev'ry region near
Seemed all one mutual cry. I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder !

SHAKSPEARE.

AT an early hour, Courtenay and his companions started with their attendants for the scene of action. Several elephants, as well as horses, had been provided, that the officers might mount them when they arrived, and fire from their backs with more deliberate aim. In less than two hours they reached the spot, which they had surveyed the day before. The game,

which had been driven from jungle to jungle for many miles round, was now collected together in one large mass of underwood and low trees, three sides of which were surrounded by the natives, who had been employed in the service, and who had been joined by many hundreds from the town and neighbouring villages. As soon as the party arrived, those who were on horseback dismounted, took their stations upon the howdahs of the elephants, and collected at the corner of that side of the jungle at which the animals were to be driven out. The scene was one of the most animating and novel description. Forty or fifty of the superior classes of natives, mounted upon fiery Arabians, with their long, glittering boar-spears in their hands, and above one hundred on foot, armed with musquets, surrounded the elephants upon which the officers were stationed. The people, who were waiting round the jungle, silent themselves, and busy in checking the noise and impatience of the dogs, held in leashes, whose

deep baying was occasionally answered by a low growl from the outskirts of the wood, now received the order to advance. Shouts and yells, mixed with the barking of the dogs, were raised in deafening clamour on every side. The jungle, which covered a space of fifteen or twenty acres, and which had hitherto appeared but slightly tenanted, answered, as if endued with life, by waving its boughs and rustling its bushes in every direction, although there was nothing to be seen.

As they advanced, beating with their long poles, and preserving a straight and compact line, through which nothing could escape, so did the jungle before them increase its motion; and soon the yells of thousands of men were answered by the roars and cries of thousands of brute animals. It was not, however, until the game had been driven so near to the end of the jungle at which the hunters were stationed, and until they were huddled together so close that it could no longer contain them, that they

unwillingly abandoned it. The most timorous, the rabbit and the hare, and all the smaller tribes, first broke cover, and were allowed to pass unnoticed; but they were soon followed by the whole mass, who, as if by agreement among themselves, had determined at once to decide their fate.

Crowded in incongruous heaps, without any distinction of species or of habits, now poured out the various denizens of the woods—deer in every variety locking their horns in their wild confusion; the fierce wild-boars, bristling in their rage; the bounding leopards; the swift antelope, of every species; the savage panthers; jackals, and foxes, and all the screaming and shrieking infinities of the monkey tribe. Occasionally, amongst the dense mass could be perceived the huge boa-constrictor, rolling in convolutions—now looking back with fiery eyes upon his pursuers, now precipitating his flight—while the air was thronged with its winged tenants, wildly screaming, and occasionally

dropping down dead with fear. To crown the whole, high in the expanse a multitude of vultures appeared, almost stationary on the wing, waiting for their share of the anticipated slaughter. And as the beasts threw down and rolled over each other in their mad career,—the preyer and the preyed upon, the powerful and the weak, the rapacious and the harmless, the destroyer and his victims—you might have fancied, from the universal terror which prevailed, that it was a day of judgment to which the inhabitants had been summoned.

It was not a day of mercy ;—the slaughter commenced ; shot after shot laid them in the dust, while the natives, on their Arabians, charged with their spears into the thickest of the crowd, regardless of the risk which they encountered from the musquets of other parties. The baying of the large dogs, who tore down their victims, the din occasionally increased by the contention and growls of the assailed, the yells of the natives, and the shrill cries of the

elephants, raised in obedience to their conductors, to keep the more ferocious animals at a distance, formed a scene to which no pen can do justice. In a few minutes all was over; those who had escaped were once more hid, panting in the neighbouring jungles, while those who had fallen covered the ground, in every direction, and in every variety.

“Very fine tiger hunt, Sir,” observed the interpreter to Courtenay, with exultation.

“Very fine, indeed, Seymour; this is something like a battue. What would some of your English sportsmen have given to have been here? But, interpreter, I don’t see any tigers.”

“Great tigers? No, Sar, no great tiger in this country. Call dis tiger?” said the man, pointing with his finger to a prostrate leopard.

Such is the case—the regal Bengal tiger, as well as his rival the lion, admits of no copartnership in his demesnes. On the banks of the impetuous rivers of India, he ranges, alone, the

jungles which supply his wants, and permits them not to be poached by inferior sportsmen. Basking his length in the sun, and playing about his graceful tail, he prohibits the intrusion of the panther or the leopard. His majestic compeer seems to have entered into an agreement with him, that they shall not interfere with each other's manorial rights, and where you find the royal tiger, you need not dread the presence of the lion. Each has established his dominion where it has pleased him, both respecting each other, and leaving the rest of the world to be preyed upon by their inferiors.

“ Well, Prose, how many did you kill ? ”

“ Why, to tell you the truth, Seymour, I never fired my musquet. I was so astonished and so frightened that I could not ; I never believed that there were so many beasts in the whole universe.”

“ I am convinced,” observed Macallan, “ that I saw an animal hitherto undescribed—I fired at it, but an antelope bounded by as I pulled

my trigger, and received the ball—I never regretted any thing so much in my life. Did you see it?”

“I saw a number of most undescrivable animals,” replied Courtenay; “but let us descend, and walk over the field of slaughter.”

The party dismounted, and for some time amused themselves with examining the variety of the slain. The deer and antelopes were the most plentiful; but, on enumeration, nine panthers and leopards, and fifteen wild-boars, headed the list. Prose and Seymour were walking side by side, when they perceived a monkey sitting on the ground, with a most pitiful face; it was of a small variety, with a long tail; it made no effort to escape as they approached it, but on the contrary appeared to court their notice, by looking at them with a melancholy air, and uttering loud cries, as if in pain.

“Poor little fellow,” said Seymour, apostrophising the animal, “it looks as if it were a rational being.—Where are you hurt?”

The monkey, as if it were a rational being, looked down on one of his hind legs, and put his finger into the wound where the ball had entered.

"Well now, I do declare," said Prose, "but the poor beast understands you."

Seymour examined the leg, without any resistance on the part of the monkey, who continued to look first at the wound, and then in their faces, as if to say, "Why did you do it?"

"Macallan, come here," ejaculated Seymour, "and see if you can assist this poor little fellow."

Macallan came up, and examined the wound—
"I think it will recover; the bone is not broken, and no vital part is touched. We'll bandage it up, and take him home."

"How very like a human being it is," observed Courtenay; "it appears only to want speech—it's really excessively annoying."

"Rather mortifying to our pride, I grant," replied Macallan.

“That’s exactly what I mean.”

Seymour tore up his handkerchief for bandages, and the monkey was consigned to the care of a native.—(*Par parenthèse*, it eventually recovered; and from the peculiarity of its history, and the request of Seymour, was allowed by Captain M—— to remain on board of the frigate, where it became a great favourite. HIGH CASTE, on the contrary, disappeared a few days after his reception, having been thrown over-board by some of the people that he had bitten, and Captain M—— made no inquiries after him. So much for the two monkies.)

By this time the natives had collected the game, which was carried in procession before the officers. The leopards and panthers, which they skinned, and rudely stuffed with grass, in an incredibly short time, leading the procession, followed by the wild-boars, deer, and antelopes, each carried between two men, slung under bamboos, which rested on their shoulders. The procession having passed in review before them,

continued its course to the town, followed by crowds of people who had come out to join the sport.

"Gentlemen like dine here?" inquired the interpreter—"soon make dinner ready, but no ab tent."

"Thanks to *you*, doctor, they won't trust us with another. I vote we dine here, for I am hungry enough to eat a buffalo, without anchovy sauce—eh, Mr. Prose? Let us dine under your acacia, on the little mount. There is a fine breeze blowing, and plenty of shade from the tree."

Courtenay's proposal was agreed to, and the interpreter gave the directions. He then told the doctor, that if Saib wished to see snake man, he come now, and bring very fine snake.

The man made his appearance, holding in his hand a small earthen chatty, or pot, in which he had confined the snake, covered over with a linen rag. He exchanged a few sentences with

the interpreter, who explained that "man not afraid of bite of snake, and if gentleman give him rupee, he let snake bite him—man eat herb, same as little beast that kill snake."

"Oh, the plant that the ichneumon resorts to when bitten," exclaimed Macallan. "This will be a most curious fact, and I must witness it. Interpreter, tell him that I will reward him handsomely."

"How does he catch the snakes?" inquired Seymour.

"Blow little pipe, Sar," replied the interpreter, pointing to a small reed, perforated with five or six holes, suspended by a string to the man's neck; "snake like music."

He then proceeded to explain the manner of taking the snakes, which was effected by lying down close to the hole where the snake was, and by playing a few soft notes with the pipe. The snake, attracted by the sound, puts his head out of the hole, and is immediately firmly grasped

by the neck, by which he is held until his fangs are extracted, by jerking them out with a piece of rag, held for him to bite at.

“Strange,” observed Courtenay, “that snakes should be fond of music, and still stranger that people should have discovered it.”

“And yet it has long been known,—perhaps, from time immemorial,” answered Macallan. “The comparisons of the Scripture are all derived from eastern scenery and eastern customs. Do you not recollect the words of the psalmist, who compareth the wicked to the deaf adder, who, ‘will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely?’”

“I recollect it now,” answered Courtenay; “from which I infer, that as snakes are not caught for nothing, they danced before King Solomon.”

“Perhaps they did, or at least in his time.”

The man carefully removed the cloth from the top of the chatty, and watching his opportunity, seized the snake by the neck, who imme-

diately wound itself round his arm. Holding it in that position; he rapidly chewed leaves which he had wrapped in the cloth which encircled his loins. After having laid a heap of the masticated leaves near him, he swallowed a large quantity, and then applied the head of the snake to his left ear, which the animal immediately bit so as to draw blood. It was a cobra di capella of the largest size, being nearly six feet long. As soon as the snake had bitten him, he replaced it in the chatty, and at the same time that he continued to swallow the leaves, rubbed the wounded part with some of the heap which he had masticated, and laid down beside him.

There was a silence, and a degree of painful anxiety, on the part of the spectators, during the process. The man appeared to be sick and giddy, and laid down, but gradually recovered, and, making a low salaam, received his largess, handed the snake, in the chatty, to Macallan, and departed.

“A most curious fact—an excessively curious

fact," observed the doctor, putting up his tablets, and a handful of the leaves which he had taken the precaution to obtain.

"Now, gentlemen, dinner all ready," observed the interpreter.

The dinner had been spread out on the little mount, pointed out by Courtenay. It rose, isolated from the plain, to the height of about thirty feet, with a steep and regular ascent on every side. The summit was flat, and in the centre the acacia waved its graceful and pendant flowers to the breeze, each moment altering the position of the bright spot of sunshine, which pierced through its branches, and reflected on the grass beneath. The party, (consisting of the officers of the ship, the grave deputy, and his immediate suite, about fifteen in number,) whose appetites were keen from their morning exercise and excitement, gladly hailed the summons, and seating themselves in a circle round the viands, which were spread under the tree, crossed their legs, after the Ma-

homedan custom, and made a furious attack upon the provender.

Macallan, to secure his newly-acquired treasure, hung the chatty, by its string, upon one of the long thorns of the acacia, and then took his seat with the rest. Ample justice having been done to what had been placed before them, mirth and good humour prevailed. Courtenay had just persuaded the grave old deputy to break through the precepts of his religion, and partake of the forbidden cup, in the shape of a tumbler of Madeira, when the chatty, which the doctor had suspended aloft, by the constant waving of the tree to the wind worked off the thorn, and falling down in the very centre of the circle, smashed into atoms, and the cobra di capella met their gaze, reared upon the very tip of his tail, his hood expanded to the utmost in his wrath, hissing horribly, and darting out his forked tongue,—waving, among the many, upon whom first to dart.

Never was a convivial party so suddenly dis-

persed. For one, and but one moment, they were all paralysed; no one attempted to get up and run away—then, as if by a simultaneous thought, they all threw themselves back, tossing their heels over their heads, and continuing their eccentric career. Musselmen and Europeans all tumbled backwards, heels over head, down the descent, diverging in every point of the compass, until they reached their respective situations at the bottom of the mount; while the cobra di capella still remained in his menacing attitude, as if satisfied with the universal homage paid to his dreadful powers.

They all recovered their legs (as they had gained the bottom of the hill) about the same time. Courtenay and Seymour, now that the danger was over, were convulsed with laughter—Macallan in amazement—Prose, with his eyes starting out of his head, uttering his usual “I do declare”—the deputy as grave as ever—and the remainder, fortunately, more frightened than they were hurt.

One of the native servants put an end to the scene, by re-ascending the hill with a long bamboo, with which he struck the animal to the ground, and subsequently dispatched him. By this time all had recovered from their alarm, and in a few minutes their seats were resumed. The doctor, who was vexed at the loss of his snake, commenced an examination of the body, and was still more mortified to find that the wily Hindoo had deceived him, the venomous fangs having been already extracted.

“It is positively a fact,” observed he, to Courtenay, in ill humour; “he has cheated me.”

“A most curious fact,” replied Courtenay, shrugging up his shoulders, and lowering the corners of his mouth. “Now, Macallan, what’s the use of your memoranda about time of biting, appearance of patient, &c.? Allow, for once, that there are some things which are ‘excessively annoying.’”

The party soon after remounted, and pro-

ceeded to the town. The next morning they repaired on board, and the queen having at last concocted the letter of thanks, the Aspasia weighed, and proceeded to Bombay.

CHAPTER V.

An you like a *ready* knave, here is one of most approved convenience : he will cheat you moreover to your heart's content. If you believe me not, try him.

THE COLONY, 1635.

THE Aspasia continued her passage with light but favourable winds. As the ship made but little progress, Captain M—— stood into Goa Bay, as he passed by that relic of former grandeur and prosperity—alas ! like the people who raised it, how fallen from its “ high estate.” The town still covers the same vast extent of ground ; the churches still rear their heads

above the other buildings in their beautiful proportions, the Palace of the Inquisition still lowers upon you in its fanatical gloom, and massive iron bars. But where is the wealth, the genius, the enterprise, the courage, and religious enthusiasm which raised these majestic piles? A scanty population, of mixed Hindoo and Portuguese blood, or of half-converted Indians, are the sole occupiers of this once splendid city of the east. Read the history of the Moors when in Spain, their chivalry, and their courage, their learning and advancement in the arts,—and now view their degraded posterity on the African coast. Reflect upon the energy and perseverance of the Spaniards, at the time when they drove out those conquerors of their country after a struggle of so many years—their subsequent discovery and possession of a western world—and behold them now. Turn to the Portuguese, who, setting an example of perseverance and activity to the nations of Europe, in vessels in which we should now think

it almost insanity to make the attempt, forced their passage round the Horny Cape, undeterred by disasters or by death, and grasped the empire of the east. What are they in the scale of nations now ?

How rapid these transitions ! Two hundred years have scarcely rolled away—other nations, with the fabrics they have raised, have been precipitated to the dust ; but they have departed, full of years, and men and things have run their race together. But here, the last in all their splendor, while the energies of the former have decayed, remains ; and where have we a more melancholy picture of humanity, either in an individual or in a nation, than when we survey the body that has outlived the mind ?

Since the world began, history is but the narrative of kingdoms and states progressing to maturity or decay. Man himself is but an epitome of the nations of men. In youth, all energy ; in prime of life, all enterprise and

vigour; in senility, all weakness and second childhood. Then, England, learn thy fate from the unerring page of time. Sooner or later, it shall arrive that thou shalt be tributary to some nation, hitherto, I trust, unborn; and thy degenerate sons shall read that liberty was once the watchword of the isle, and yet not even feel a longing to be free.

As the *Aspasia* lay nearly becalmed at the entrance of the harbour, a small boat, rowed by two men, pulled towards her, and the occupant of the stern-sheets, as he came alongside, stated, in bad English, that he brought 'present for captain,' and was allowed to come up the side by the first-lieutenant, who was on deck. He was a native friar, and disgusting as the dress is, when worn by an European, in a northern clime, it appeared still more so, enveloping a black under the Torrid Zone. He carried a little covered basket in his hand, and stated that he had been sent by the superior of the convent, which he pointed to on the head-land at the

mouth of the harbour. The first-lieutenant went down into the cabin, and reported to the captain.

“A present!” observed Captain M——; “I hope it is not a monkey—‘*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*’”

The first-lieutenant, who had forgotten his Latin, made no answer, but returned on deck, where he was shortly after followed by Captain M——.

The sable votary of St. Francis made his bow, and opening the lid of his basket, pulled out a cabbage, with a long stalk and four or five flagging leaves, but no heart to it. “Superior send present to Inglez capitown.” And having laid it carefully on the carronade slide, fumbled in his pockets for some time, and eventually produced a dirty sheet of paper, on which, written in execrable English, was a petition to assist the wants of the convent.

“I expected as much,” observed Captain M——, smiling, as he ran over the ridiculous

wording of the petition. "Desire the purser's steward to get up a bag of biscuit, and put it into the boat."

The bread was handed on the gangway, when the friar, observing it, went up to the captain, and said, "Superior like rum, Sar; suppose you no rum teng like money."

"Perhaps he may," replied Captain M——; "but it is against my rules to give the first, and, if I recollect right, against those of your order to receive the second."

Finding that nothing more was to be obtained, the friar was about to depart, when, perceiving the cabbage lying unnoticed where he had deposited it, he observed—"Capitown, non quer cabbage—not want?"

"Not particularly," replied Captain M——, surveying it with rather a contemptuous smile.

"Then take it ashore, plant it again—do for 'nother ship;" and he replaced the present in his basket, made his bow, and departed.

Reader, cabbages are scarce articles in India.

I have seen them at Pondicherry, growing in flower-pots, as curious exotics.

Two days afterwards, the *Aspasia* came to an anchor at Bombay, and having saluted the admiral, Captain M—— went on shore to pay his respects in person. The ship was soon crowded with a variety of people, who came off to solicit the washing, &c., of the officers. The gun-room officers had just finished their dinner, and the cloth had been removed, when our friend Billy Pitt entered, introducing a slim personage, attired in a robe of spotless white, with the dark turban, peculiar to the Parsees, and bringing in his hand a small basket of fruit.

“Massa Courtenay, here mulatta fellow want speak to officers. Call himself Dubash—look in dictionary, and no such word in English language.”

“It means a washerman, I suppose,” observed Price.

“No, Sir,” answered the man for himself, with a graceful bow, “not a washerman, but at same time get all your clothes washed. Dubash go to market, supply gentlemen with every thing they want—run everywhere for them—bring off meat and fish, and every thing else—every body have Dubash here—I Dubash to all the ships come here—got very good certificate, Sir,” continued the Parsee, drawing a thin book from his vest, and presenting it to Courtenay with a low bow.

“Well, Mr. Dubash, let us see what your character may be,” said Courtenay, opening the book.

“Yes, Sir, you please to read them, and I go speak to young gentlemen, before other Dubash come on board; I bring gentlemen little fruit,” and laying the basket respectfully on the table, with another low salaam, the man quitted the gun-room.

Courtenay read for a minute, and then burst

into a fit of laughter. "Very good certificates, indeed," observed he, "only hear—

" '1st.—This is to certify, that Hommajee Baba served the gun-room mess of his Majesty's Ship Flora, and cheated us most damnably.

(Signed)

" ' Peter Hicks, 1st Lieut.

" ' Jonas Smith, Purser.' "

" ' 2nd.—Hommajee Baba served me as Dubash during my stay in this port. He is a useful fellow, but a great scoundrel. I gave him one half of his bill, and he was perfectly satisfied. I recommend others to do the same.

(Signed)

" ' Andrew Thompson,
Company's Ship, Clio.' "

" ' 3rd.—I perfectly agree with the above remarks; but as all the other Dubashes are as

great thieves, and not half so intelligent, I conscientiously recommend Hommajee Baba.

(Signed)

“ ‘ Peter Phillips,
Captain Honbl. Company's Cruiser, Vestal.’

“ ‘ 4th—Of all the scoundrels that I ever had to deal with, in this most rascally quarter of a most knavish world, Hommajee Baba is the greatest. Never give him any money, as he will find it; but when you go away, pay him one third of his bill, and you will still have paid him too much.

(Signed)

“ ‘ Billy Helflame,
Captain H. M. S. Spitfire.’

About a dozen pages of the book were filled with certificates to the above effect, which the Dubash, although he spoke English fluently, not being able to read, considered, as he had

been informed at the time, to be decidedly in his favour. They were so far valuable, that they put new comers upon their guard, and prevented much extortion on the part of the said Hommajee.

When the laughter had to a degree subsided, Billy Pitt was the first to exclaim—"D—n black villain—I tink so, when he come to me ; not like cut of um jib—"

" ' Who steals my purse, steals trash,' " spouted Price.

" Cause you never have money, Mr. Price," cried Billy, interrupting him.

" Silence Sir,—' But he who filches from me my good name, robs me of that—of that '—"

" Rob you of what, Sar ?"

" Silence, Sir," again cried Price—" ' robs me of that—' what is it ?—that d—d black thief has put it out of my head—"

" I not the thief, Sar—Massa Price, you always forget end of your story."

“ I’ll make an end of you directly, Sir, if you’re not off.”

“ No ! don’t kill Billy,” observed Courtenay ; “ it’s bad enough to have murdered Shakespeare. Well, but now, in my opinion, that we ought to employ this fellow—and take the advice that has been given to us in this book.”

Courtenay’s proposal was assented to, and on his return, Hommajee Baba was installed in office.

The next morning, Seymour, Courtenay, and Macallan went on shore to meet an old acquaintance of the latter, who had called upon him on his arrival. By his advice, they left the ship, before the sun had risen, that they might be enabled to walk about, and view the town and its environs, without being incommoded by the heat. They reached the long plain close to the sea, upon which the admiral and many others, according to the custom of

the English inhabitants, were residing, in capacious tents; not such tents as have been seen in England, but impervious to the heat and rain, covering a large extent of ground, divided into several apartments, and furnished like any other residence. The broad expanse of ocean, which met their view, was unruffled, and the beach was lined with hundreds, standing on their carpets, spread upon the sand, with their faces turned toward the east. As the sun rose in splendor above the horizon, they all prostrated themselves in mute adoration, and continued in that position until his disk had cleared the water's edge—they then rose, and throwing a few flowers into the rippling wave, folded up their carpets and departed.

“Who are those people, and of what religion?” demanded Seymour.

“They are Parsees, a remnant of the ancient Persians—the Guebres, or worshippers of fire. As you have witnessed, they also adore

the sun. They came here long since to enjoy their tenets, free from persecution. They are the most intelligent race that we have. Many of them were princes in their own country, and are now men of unbounded wealth. They have their temples here, in which the sacred fire is never permitted to go out. If, by any chance or negligence, it should become extinct, it must be relighted from Heaven alone. We have no lightning here, and they send to Calcutta, where there is plenty at the change of the monsoon, and bring it round with great ceremony."

"In other points, are their customs different from the Hindoos?"

"Yes; their women are not so immured; you will meet plenty of them when you return to town. They are easily distinguished by their fair complexions, and the large thin gold rings, with three or four pearls strung upon them, worn in a hole perforated through the nostril, and hanging below their mouths.

“And what are those immense towers on the other side of the bay?”

“They were built by the Parsees, as depositories for their dead; on the summit is a wide iron grating, upon which the bodies are laid, to be devoured by the birds of prey; when stripped, the bones fall through the iron bars into the receptacle below. They never bury their dead.—But breakfast must be ready, so we had better return. You have much to see here. The caves of Elephanta and Canara are well worthy of your attention—and I shall be happy to attend you, when you feel inclined to pay a visit to them.”

They did not fail to profit by the offer, and before the week had passed away, they had witnessed those splendid monuments of superstition and idolatry. The Aspasia received her orders, and Hommajee Baba, being paid the due proportion of his bill, received his certificate from Courtenay, in the usual form, and

so far from being affronted, requested the honour of being again employed in their services, if ever they should return to Bombay.

CHAPTER VI.

These are not foes
With whom it would be safe to strive in honour.
They will repay your magnanimity,
Assassin-like, with secret stabs.

ANON.

THE strength of the monsoon had blown over, and Captain M——, in pursuance of his orders, beat across the Bay of Bengal, for the Straits of Sumatra, where he expected to fall in with some of the enemy's privateers, who obtained their supplies of water in that direction. After cruising for six weeks, without success, they fell in with an armed English

vessel, who informed them that she had been chased by a large pirate proa, and had narrowly escaped—acquainting Captain M—— with the islet from which she had sallied out in pursuit of them, and to which she had in all probability returned.

Captain M——, naturally anxious to scour the seas of these cruel marauders, who shewed no quarter to those who had the misfortune to fall into their hands, determined to proceed in quest of this vessel, and after a week's unsuccessful reconnoitre of the various islets, which cover the seas in that quarter, one morning discovered her from the mast-head, on his weather beam, sailing and rowing down towards the frigate, to ascertain whether she was a vessel that she might venture to attack.

The *Aspasia* was disguised as much as possible, and the pirates were induced to approach, within a distance of two miles, when perceiving their mistake, they lowered their sails, and turning the head of their vessel in the opposite

direction, pulled away from the frigate, right in the wind's eye. The breeze freshened, and all possible sail was crowded on the *Aspasia*, to overtake them, and although at the close of the day, they had not neared her much, the bright moon enabled them to keep the vessel in view during the night. Early in the morning, (the crew being probably exhausted from their incessant labour,) she kept away for some islets broad upon the *Aspasia's* weather bow, and came to an anchor in a small cove between the rocks, which sheltered her from the guns of the frigate.

Captain M—— considered it his duty at all risk to destroy the proa; and, hoisting out the boats, he gave the command to his first-lieutenant, with strict injunctions how to deal with such treacherous and ferocious enemies. The launch was under repair at the time, and could not be employed; but the barge, pinnace, and two cutters were considered fully adequate to the service. Courtenay was second in com-

mand, in the pinnace; Seymour had charge of one cutter; and, at his own particular request, Prose was entrusted with the other.

"I do declare, I think that I should like to go," observed Prose, when he first heard that the vessel was to be cut out.

"Why you ought, Prose," replied Seymour; "you have never been on service yet."

"No—and you and I are the only two passed midshipmen in the ship." (Seymour and Prose had both passed their examination, when the *Aspasia* was at Bombay.) "I think that I have a right to one of the boats."

So thought the first-lieutenant, when he made his application, and he obtained the command accordingly.

The boats shoved off, as soon as the men had swallowed their breakfasts, and in less than an hour were but a short distance from the proa, which proved to be one of the largest size. A discharge of langrage from one of the

two long brass guns, mounted on her prow, flew amongst the boats, without taking effect. A second discharge was more destructive, three of the men in the boat which Prose commanded being struck down, bleeding, under the thwarts,—the oars, which they had not relinquished their hold of, when they fell, being thrown high up in air.

“Holloa! I say—All catching crabs together!” cried Prose.

“Caught something worse than a crab, Sir,” replied the coxswain—“Wilson, are you much hurt?”

“The rascals have let daylight in, I’m afraid,” answered the man, faintly.

“Well, I do declare I’d no idea the poor fellows were wounded. Coxswain, take one of the oars, and I’ll steer the boat, or we never shall get alongside. I say, Mr. Jolly, can’t you pull?”

“Yes, Sir, upon a pinch,” answered the

marine whom he addressed, laying his musquet on the stern-sheets, and taking one of the unmanned oars.

“ Well, there now, give way.”

“ But the delay occasioned by this mishap had left the cutter far astern of the other boats, who, paying no attention to her, had pulled alongside, and boarded the vessel. The conflict was short, from the superior numbers of the English, and the little difficulty in getting on board of a vessel with so low a gunnel. By the time that Prose came alongside in the cutter, the pirates were either killed, or had been driven below. Prose jumped on the gunnel, flourishing his cutlass—from the gunnel he sprung on the deck, which was not composed of planks, as in vessels in general, but of long bamboos, running fore and aft, and lashed together with rattans; and as Prose descended upon the rounded surface, which happened where he alighted to be slippery with blood,

his feet were thrown up, and he came down on the deck in a sitting posture.

“Capital jump, Mr. Prose,” cried Courtenay; “but you have arrived too late to shed your blood in your country’s cause—very annoying, an’t it?”

“O Lord!—O Lord!—I do declare—oh—oh—oh!” roared Prose, attempting to recover his feet, and then falling down again.

“Good heavens, what’s the matter, Prose?” cried Seymour, running to his assistance.

“Oh Lord!—oh Lord!—Another!—oh!”—again cried Prose, making a half spring from the deck, from which he was now raised by Seymour, who again inquired what was the matter? Prose could not speak—he pointed his hand behind him, and his head fell upon Seymour’s shoulder.

“He’s wounded, Sir,” observed one of the men who had joined Seymour, pointing to the blood, which ran from the trousers of Prose in

a little rivulet. "Be quick, Mr. Seymour, and get on the gunnel, or they'll have you too. The fact was, that the deck, being composed of bamboos, as already described, one of the pirates below had passed his creese through the spaces between them into Prose's body, when he came down on deck in a sitting posture, and had repeated the blow when he failed to recover his feet after the first wound.

One of the seamen, who had not provided himself with shoes, now received a severe wound; and after Prose had been handed into one of the boats, a consultation was held as to the most eligible method of proceeding.

It was soon decided that it would be the extreme of folly to attack such desperate people below, where they would have a great advantage with their creeses over the cutlasses of the seamen; and as there appeared no chance of inducing them to come up, it was determined to cut the cables, and tow the vessel alongside

of the frigate, who could sink her with a broadside.

The cables were cut, and a few men being left on board to guard the hatchways, the boats commenced towing out ; but scarcely had they got way on her, when, to their astonishment, a thick smoke was followed by the flames bursting out in every direction, consuming all on board with a rapidity that seemed incredible. From the deck, the fire mounted to the rigging ; thence to the masts and sails ; and before the boats could be backed astern to take them out, those who had been left were forced to leap into the sea to save themselves from the devouring element. The pirates had themselves set fire to the vessel. Most of them remained below, submitting to suffocation with sullen indifference. Some few, in the agony of combustion, were perceived, through the smoke, to leap overboard, and seek in preference a less painful death. The boats laid upon their oars,

and witnessed the scene in silence and astonishment.

“Desperate and determined to the last,” observed the first-lieutenant.

In a very few minutes the proa, whose fabric was of the slightest materials, filled, and went down. The last column of smoke, divided from her by the water, ascended in the air as she sunk down below, and nought remained but a few burnt fragments of bamboo, which lay floating on the wave. A few seconds after the vessel had disappeared, one of the pirates rose to the surface.

“There is a man alive yet,” observed Courtenay. “Let us save him if we can.”

The boat, by his directions, pulled a few strokes of the oars, and having rather too much way, shot a-head, so as to bring the man close to the counter of the boat. Courtenay leaned over the gunnel to haul him in; the malignant wretch grasped him by the collar with his left hand, and with his right darted his creese into

Courtenay's breast ; then, as if satisfied, with an air of mingled defiance and derision, immediately sunk under the bottom of the pinnacle, and was seen no more.

“ Ungrateful viper !” murmured Courtenay, as he fell into the arms of his men.

The boats hastened back to the frigate ; they had but few men hurt, except those mentioned in our narrative ; but the wounds of Courtenay and of Prose were dangerous. The creeses of the pirates had been steeped in the juice of the pineapple, which, when fresh applied, is considered as a deadly poison. The *Aspasia* soon afterwards anchored in Madras Roads, and a removal to a more invigorating clime was pronounced essential to the recovery of the two officers. Courtenay and Prose were invalided, and sent home in an East Indiaman, but it was many months before they were in a state of convalescence. Captain M—— gave an acting order as lieutenant to Seymour, and when he joined the admiral, expressed himself so warmly in his

behalf, that it was not superseded; and our hero now walked the quarter-deck as third lieutenant of H. M.'s ship *Aspasia*.

If the reader is not, by this time, tired of India, I am. To narrate all that occurred would far exceed the limits of this work. I shall, therefore, confine myself to stating that, after three years, Captain M—— quitted the country, having during his stay gained much in reputation, but lost more in constitution. When we return to the frigate, she will be well advanced on her passage home.

CHAPTER VII.

When souls which should agree to will the same—
To have one common object for their wishes,
Look diff'rent ways, regardless of each other,
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues !

ROWE.

BUT we must return to England, or we shall lose sight of the Rainscourt family, in which much that is interesting has occurred since our hero's absence in the East.

Mr. Rainscourt made occasional visits to the hall, with the hope of inducing his wife to break through her resolution, and once more to

reside with him under the same roof; but in this he could not succeed: for although Mrs. Rainscourt received him with kindness and urbanity, she was too well aware, by information received from many quarters, of the life of excess which he indulged in, ever again to trust her happiness in his keeping. Nevertheless, pursuing his point with an obstinacy that seemed surprising, Rainscourt always was to be found at the watering place to which Mrs. Rainscourt might remove for change of scene; and for nearly five years from the time when he had first paid a visit to his once neglected wife, did he continue to press his suit. The fact was, that, so far from tiring, his anxiety to effect the reunion was constantly on the increase, from the general admiration which was bestowed upon Emily when she made her appearance in public; and Rainscourt felt that his house would be more resorted to, and his company be more courted, if he could have under his immediate protection one who had beauty sufficient to

satisfy the most fastidious, and a certainty of ultimate wealth, exceeding the views of the most interested.

It was two years, or more, after the departure of Seymour, that Mrs. Rainscourt and Emily determined upon passing the autumnal months at Cheltenham, accompanied by the McElvinas. A few days after their arrival, Mr. Rainscourt made his appearance. He was now determined, if possible, to bring his suit to an issue. Some months back, he had formed the plan which he thought most likely to succeed. This was, to repair and refurnish the castle in Galway, and persuade Mrs. Rainscourt to pass a few weeks there,—when he hoped that, having her in a more isolated position, she might be induced to accede to his wishes.

Workmen had been employed for some time repairing the exterior of the ancient pile—the interior had been embellished under the guidance of a man of taste, and without any regard to expense. Splendid furniture had already been

forwarded from London, so that Mr. Rainscourt's agent had written to him, that in a few weeks the castle would be ready for his reception.

Upon his arrival at Cheltenham, Mr. Rainscourt astonished every body by his splendid equipage. His carriages, his stud, and the whole of his establishment, were quite unique. On the other hand, Mrs. Rainscourt and her daughter were equally objects of curiosity, not likely to pass unnoticed in such a place as Cheltenham, where people have nothing else to do but talk scandal, and to drink salt water as a punishment.

The arrival of a pretty heiress increased very much the flow of bile in the young ladies, and in their mammas, who did not bring them to Cheltenham merely to drink the waters. The gentlemen, moreover, did not admire being so totally eclipsed by Mr. Rainscourt, who rendered insignificant what, previous to his appearance, had been considered to be "quite the

thing." The ladies would talk of nothing but Mr. Rainscourt and his equipage—and such a handsome man, too. But, on the whole, the females were the most annoyed, as there threatened to be a stagnation in the market, until this said heiress was disposed of. Gentlemen, who had been attentive more than a week, who had been asked twice to dinner, and who had been considered to have nibbled a sufficient time to ensure their eventually taking the bait, had darted in full liberty in the direction of the great heiress.

Young ladies, who were acknowledged to have the most attractions, pecuniary or personal, who simpered and smiled to twenty young philanderers, as they took their morning glass, now poured down their lukewarm solution in indignant solitude, if Mrs. Rainscourt and her daughter made their appearance on the promenade. Real cases of bile became common; and the fair sex, in despair, although they did not, as they were evidently requested, by the con-

duct of the gentlemen, "to a nunnery go," to preserve their complexions, were necessitated to repair to the pump.

"Don't you think that Miss Rainscourt's nose is rather too straight?" asked a young lady, with one on her own face that had a strong tendency towards the pug.

"Indeed, I do not," replied a light hearted Irish girl, "although she has put ours out of joint, as they call it. I only wish I'd her face or her fortune,—either the one or the other,—and I wouldn't be coming to Cheltenham after a husband—the gentlemen should trot over to Ireland."

"How very odd that Mr. and Mrs. Rainscourt should not live together—such good friends as they seem to be."

"Oh, I know the reason of that : I was told it yesterday by Lady Wagtail. It was a runaway match, and they happened to be related within the canonical law ; they are both Roman Catholics : and the Pope found it out, and or-

dered them to be separated, upon pain of excommunication."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, and Mr. Rainscourt is waiting for a license from the conclave—a dispensation they call it. They say it is expected from Rome next post, and then they *can* be united again immediately."

"What beautiful horses Mr. Rainscourt drives."

"Yes, that curricule, with the greys and the outriders, is quite superb. He always drives through the turnpike I observe."

"To be sure he does. Why they say that he has £40,000 a year."

"And the whole is entailed upon his daughter."

"Every farthing of it."

"And who are those McElvinas? What an odd name."

"Oh, I can tell you. Mrs. Fitzpatrick says that he is of a very ancient Irish family—they

are very rich. Mr. McElvina made his fortune in India by a speculation in opium, and his wife was the only daughter of a stockbroker in the city, who died worth a plum."

"No. 4—a little warm, if you please, Mrs. Bishop."

"Yes, Miss."

About a fortnight after his arrival, Rainscourt received the intelligence from his agent that every thing was complete at the castle, and he determined to go over himself to examine it previous to communicating his interested act of gallantry to his wife. He proposed to McElvina, with whom he was on very friendly terms, to accompany him, and McElvina was decided in accepting the offer, in consequence of Mr. Rainscourt's having informed him that a large property, contiguous to his own, which had, almost from time immemorial, been in possession of the McElvina family, was now for sale, the last possessor having gambled the whole of it away.

“It may be worth your while,” continued he, “if you are inclined to possess landed property to look at it, as my agent informs me that it will be disposed of very cheap, and will give you good interest for your money.”

McElvina had long wished to live in Ireland, from which country he derived his descent, and he could not but feel that some untoward recognition might possibly take place in such a place of numerous resort as Cheltenham, by which some of the passages in his early career might be exposed. This appeared to be a chance which might not again present itself, and he gladly consented to accompany Rainscourt in his excursion.

After an absence of three weeks they returned. The castle had been fitted out in a style of lavish expenditure and taste, and Rainscourt could find little to improve or add. The property which McElvina went over to examine, suited him both in price and in situation; and having consulted his wife, who cordially ac-

quiesced in his view, he wrote to Mr. Rainscourt's agent, requesting him to conclude the purchase.

Rainscourt now determined upon making his last effort for a resumption of marital rights. Having introduced the conversation by stating in minute detail the alterations and improvements which he had made at the castle, he then informed Mrs. Rainscourt that he had been to that expense in the hope that she would take possession of it for the remainder of the autumn.

"If," said he, "you knew the pleasure it would give me once more to see you surrounded with every luxury, in the place where we formerly resided in poverty—if you knew the joy which your presence would diffuse among your affectionate tenants, and the anxiety with which they are expecting your appearance, for I must acknowledge that I promised them that you should gladden them with your return, you would not refuse the request I have made."

But Rainscourt had not calculated well. If there was any spot of which the reminiscences were peculiarly painful to his wife, it was the castle at Galway. It was there that she had been treated with severity and contempt—it was there that she had been cruelly deserted by her husband when he was restored to affluence. With the bitter feelings attendant upon these recollections, Mrs. Rainscourt penetrated into the motives which had induced her husband to act, and the balance was more than ever against his cause. “If you have fitted up the castle to oblige me, Mr. Rainscourt, I return you my grateful thanks for your kindness and consideration; but I do not think that I could enter the castle with pleasure; there are so many more painful than agreeable remembrances connected with it, that I had rather decline going there—the more so as I consider it too secluded for Emily.”

“But not too secluded, Mrs. Rainscourt,” replied her husband, dropping on one knee,

“for me to beseech pardon for my errors, and prove the sincerity of my repentance. Let me conjure you to allow it to be the scene of the renewal of my love and my admiration, as it unfortunately was of my folly and indifference.”

“Mr. Rainscourt, this interview must be decisive. Know, once for all, that such a reconciliation as you would desire never can or shall take place. Spare me the pain of recapitulation. It is enough to say that, once thrown from you, I cannot nor will not be resumed at your pleasure and fantasy. Although injured in the tenderest point, I forgive all that has passed, and shall be happy to receive you as a friend, in private as well as in public ; but all attempts to obtain more will only meet with mortification and defeat. Rise, Mr. Rainscourt. Take my hand in friendship—it is offered with cordiality ; but if you again resume the subject of this meeting, I shall be forced to deny myself to you when you call.”

Rainscourt turned pale as he complied with

her request. He had humiliated himself to no purpose. Mortified pride, mingled with rejected passion, formed a compound of deadly hate, which raged with fury against the late object of his desire. He commanded himself sufficiently to stammer out his regrets, and promised not again to introduce the subject; and lifting up the offered hand respectfully to his lips, he quitted her presence to meditate upon revenge.

The liberal settlements which he had made at the time of separation, were too firmly secured to be withheld. To remove his daughter was the next idea which presented itself; but that could not be effected. Emily was of a resolute disposition, and would not consent to leave her mother: and an appeal to Chancery would show how unfit a person he was to have the responsible charge of a young woman. The night was passed in anxious meditation, and before the morning his plans were arranged. Nothing could be accomplished by force; he must there-

fore resort to address—he would be more than ever attentive, and trust to time and opportunity for the gratification of his revenge.

The parties continued at Cheltenham; and Mr. Rainscourt, following up his plan, made an avowal to his wife, that he had now abandoned all hopes of success, and would not importune her any more. He only requested that she would receive him on those terms of intimacy in which consisted the present happiness of his life. Mrs. Rainscourt, who, although she had resolution sufficient to refuse him, felt (as every woman must feel who has once loved a man) great struggles in her own mind to decide the victory in favour of prudence, now leaned more favourably towards her husband than before. His assiduity for years—his indifference to money in fitting up the castle to please her—his humiliation when he kneeled to her, an attitude that haunted her even in her dreams—his subsequent humble expressions of regret—his polite attentions, notwithstanding his repulse—and, added

to all these, her gratified pride—all tended to soften her heart: and it is more than probable that, in a few months, she would have thought him sufficiently punished to have acceded to his wishes;—but it was fated to be otherwise.

One morning, Rainscourt called in his cur-ricle, and as the horses stood at the door, champing their bits, and tossing their heads as they were held by the dismounted grooms, Mrs. Rainscourt, who was looking out of the window with her husband, and whose heart was fast warming towards him (for the tide once turned, the flow of affection is rapid), playfully observed, “Mr. Rainscourt, you often take Emily out with you, in your curricle, but you have never offered to take me. I presume you think, that I am too old.”

“Indeed, Mrs. Rainscourt, if I had thought that you would have ventured, Emily would not so often have been seated at my side. If not too late, and you will pardon my negligence, oblige me by permitting me to drive you now.”

“ I don’t know whether I ought to do so ; but as married ladies have been, from time immemorial, forced from the field by their daughters, I believe I shall submit to the affront, and accept your offer.”

“ I feel much flattered,” replied he, “ by your kind acquiescence ; but you must allow me to desire my grooms to take these horses out, and put the others to, which are much quieter. It will be a delay of only a few minutes.”

Mrs. Rainscourt smiled, and quitted the room, to prepare for her excursion, while Rainscourt descended to the street door.

“ William, drive to the stables ; take these horses out, and put in the two others.”

“ The others, Sir !” replied the man with surprise ; “ what ! Smolensko and Pony-towsky ?”

“ Yes—be smart, and bring them round as soon as you can.”

“ Why, Sir, the two young ’uns have never been in together yet—Smolensko’s but a rum cus-

tomers, when aside of a steady horse ; and as for Pony-towsky, he jibs just as bad as ever."

"Never mind—put them in, and bring them round."

"Then I'd better tie up the dog, Sir, for they can't neither of them abide him."

"Never mind—they must be accustomed to him—so let the dog follow as usual. Be quick ;" and Rainscourt returned to the house.

"Sam, I can't for the life of me fancy what master's at to day," said William, who had delivered his horse over to the other groom, and had mounted the curricie to drive it to the stable. "If he means to drive them two devils together, there's no road in England wide enough for him."

"I'm sure I can't tell," replied the other. "No man in his senses would do it—unless, indeed, he's going to drive his wife."

"Why hardly that, for they say that he wants to marry her again."

"Marry his wife *again*!—no, no, Bill; master's too wide awake for that."

The curricie re-appeared at the door—Rainscourt handed in his wife, and the horses set off, tightly reined by Rainscourt, and flying to and fro from the pole, so as to alarm Mrs. Rainscourt, who expressed a wish to alight.

"They are only fresh at first starting, my dear—they will be quiet directly."

"Look there!" observed one of the promenaders; "there's Mr. Rainscourt driving his wife in the curricie."

"Oh, then, the bull has arrived, you may depend upon it."

As they spoke, the dog made a spring at the horses' heads,—they plunged violently, and shortly after set off at full speed.

Rainscourt could not have stopped them if he had wished it; but the fact was that he had entered the curricie determined to hazard his own life rather than not gratify his revenge. All that was left for him was to guide them, and

this he did so that the near wheel came in contact with a post. The horses, with the pole and broken traces, continued their rapid career, leaving Rainscourt, his wife, and the fragments of the vehicle, in the road.

Rainscourt's plan had been successful. Although much contused by the fall, he was not severely injured. Mrs. Rainscourt, who had been thrown out with more violence, over the head of her husband, was taken up with a fractured skull, and in a few minutes breathed her last.

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh, for a forty-parson power to chant

Thy praise, Hypocrisy ! Oh, for a hymn

Loud as the virtues thou dost loudly vaunt,

Not practise !

BYRON.

Hypocrisy, the thriving'st calling,

The only saint's-bell that rings all in :

A gift that is not only able

To domineer among the rabble,

But by the law 's empowered to rout,

And awe the greatest that stand out.

HUDIBRAS.

“ ALL-PERVADING essence, whose subtle spirit
hath become a part component of everything
this universe contains—power that presidest
over nations and countries, kingdoms and cities,
courts and palaces, and every human tenement,
even to the lowly cot—leaven of the globe,
that workest in the councils of its princes, in
the reasonings of its senates, in the atmosphere

of the court, in the traffic of the city, in the smiles of the enamoured youth, and in the blush of the responding maid — thou that clothest with awe the sergeant's coif and the bishop's robe — thou that assistest at our nurture, our education, and our marriage, our death, our funeral, and habiliments of woe, — all hail !

“Chameleon spirit—at once contributing to the misery of our existence and adding to its fancied bliss—at once detested, and a charm to be eschewed, and to be practised—that, with thy mystic veil, dimmest the bright beauty of virtue, and concealest the dark deformity of vice — imperishable, glorious, and immortal HUMBUG !—Hail !

“Thee I invoke—and thus, with talismanic pen, commence my spells,—and charge thee, in the name of courtiers' bows, of great men's promises, of bribery oaths, of woman's smiles, and tears of residuary legatees—

“Appear !

“By thy favourite works,—thy darling sink-

ing fund,—the blessings of free trade,—thy joint-stock companies,—the dread of Popery,—the liberality of East India Directors, and the sincerity of West India Philanthropists—

“Descend !

“By thy annual pageants—by the Lord Mayor’s Shew, and reform in parliament—by Burdett’s democracy, and the first of April—by explanations, and calls for papers—by Bartlemy fair, and the minister’s budget—

“Come !

“By lawyers’ consultations, and Chancery delay—public meetings, and public dinners,—loyal toasts, and ‘three times three’—lady patronesses, and lords directors,—and by the decoy subscription of the chair—

“Descend !

“By the *nolo episcopari* of the Bishops—

“Come !

“By newspaper puffs, and newspaper reports,—by patent medicines, and portable dressing-cases, wine merchant’s bottles, ne-plus-ultra

corkscrews,—H——t's corn, C——tt's maize,
W——'s blacking, and W——'s cham-
pagne—

“Appear !

“By thy professional followers, the fashion-
able tailors, hair-dressers, boot-makers, milli-
ners, jewellers—all the auctioneers, and all the
bazaars—

“Come to my aid !

“By thy interested worshippers—by shuffling
W——e, by Z—— M——y, Lawyer S——ns,
W——m S——th, T——l B——n, Sir
G——r M'G——r, and Dom M——l—

“Appear !

“By thy talented votaries—

“Descend !

“Stillheedless?—Then, by the living B——m,
and the shade of C——g, come !

“Rebellious and wayward spirit ! I tell
thee, come thou must, whether thou art
at a council to wage a war in which thou-
sands shall perish, or upon the padding of a

coat, by which, unpaid for, but one ninth part of a man shall suffer—whether thou art forging the powerful artillery of woman against unarmed man, and directing the fire from her eye, which, like that of the Egyptian queen, shall lose an empire—or art just as busy in the adjustment of the bustle* of a lady's-maid—appear thou must. There is one potent spell, one powerful name, which shall force thee trembling to my presence.—Now—

“ By all that is *contemptible*—

“ By his patriotism, his affection for the army and the navy—by his flow of eloquence, and his strength of argument—by the correctness of his statements, and the precision of his arithmetic—by his sum *tottle*, and by Joey H—e, himself—

“ Appear !”

* I am not certain whether I spell this modern invention correctly ; if not, I must plead ignorance. I have asked several ladies of my acquaintance, who declare that they never heard of such a thing, which, perhaps, the reader will agree with me, is all humbug.

[*Humbug descends, amidst a discharge of
Promethean and copperplate thunder.*]

“ ’Tis well !—Now perch upon the tip, and guide my pen, and contrive that the wickedness and hypocrisy of the individual may be forgotten in the absurdity of the scene.”

The grooms made no scruple, after the catastrophe, to state all that had passed between them and their master ; it was spread through Cheltenham with the usual rapidity of all scandal, in a place where people have nothing to do but to talk about each other. The only confutation which the report received, was the conduct of Mr. Rainscourt. He was positively inconsolable—he threw himself upon the remains, declaring that nothing should separate him from his dear—dear Clara. The honest old curate, who had attended Mrs. Rainscourt in her last moments, had great difficulty, with the assistance of the men servants, in removing him to another chamber on the ensuing day.

Some declared that he repented of his unkind behaviour, and that he was struck with remorse; the females observed, that men never knew the value of a wife, until they lost her; others thought his grief was all humbug, although they acknowledged, at the same time, that they could not find out any interested motives, to induce him to act such a part.

But when Mr. Rainscourt insisted that the heart of the deceased should be embalmed, and directed it to be enshrined in an urn of massive gold, then all Cheltenham began to think that he was sincere,—at least all the ladies did; and the gentlemen, married or single, were either too wise or too polite to offer any negative remark, when his conduct was pronounced to be a pattern for all husbands. Moreover, Mr. Potts, the curate, vouched for his sincerity, in consequence of the handsome gratuity which he had received for consigning Mrs. Rainscourt to the vault, and the liberal largess to the poor upon the same occasion. “How could any man

prove his sincerity more?" thought Mr. Potts, who, blinded by gratitude, forgot that although in affliction our hearts are softened towards the miseries of others, on the other hand, we are quite as (if not more) liberal when intoxicated with good fortune.

Be it as it may, the conduct of Mr. Rainscourt was pronounced most exemplary. All hints and surmises of former variance were voted scandalous, and all Cheltenham talked of nothing but the dead Mrs. Rainscourt, the living Mr. Rainscourt, the heart, and the magnificent gold urn.

"Have you heard how poor Mr. Rainscourt is?" was the usual question at the pump, as the ladies congregated to pour down No. 3, or No. 4, in accordance with the directions of the medical humbugs.

"More resigned—they say he was seen walking after dark."

"Was he, indeed? to the church-yard, of course. Poor dear man!"

"Miss Emily's maid told my Abigail last night, that she looks quite beautiful in her mourning. But I suppose she will not come on the promenade again, before she leaves Cheltenham."

"She ought not," replied a young lady, who did not much approve of so handsome an heiress remaining at Cheltenham. "It will be very incorrect if she does: some one ought to tell her so."

With the exception of Mr. Potts, no one had dared to break in upon the solitude of Mr. Rainscourt, who had remained the whole day upon the sofa, with the urn on the table before him, and the shutters closed to exclude the light. The worthy curate called upon him every evening, renewing his topics of consolation, and pointing out the duty of christian resignation. A deep sigh! a heavy Ah! or a long drawn Oh! were all the variety of answers that could be obtained for some days. But time does wonders: and Mr. Rainscourt at last inclined an ear to the news of the day, and listened with

marked attention to the answers which he elicited from the curate, by his indirect questions, as to what the world said about him.

“Come, come, Mr. Rainscourt, do not indulge your grief any more. Excess becomes criminal. It is my duty to tell you so, and yours to attend to me. It is not to be expected that you will immediately return to the world and its amusements; but as there must be a beginning, why not come and take your family dinner to-day with Mrs. Potts, and me? Now let me persuade you—she will be delighted to see you—we dine at five. A hot joint—nothing more.”

Rainscourt, who was rather tired of solitude, refused in such a way as to induce the worthy curate to reiterate his invitation, and at length, with great apparent unwillingness, consented. The curate sat with him until the dinner hour, when, leaning on the pastor's arm, Rainscourt walked down the street, in all the trappings of his woe, and his eyes never once raised from the ground.

"There's Mr. Rainscourt!" "There's Mr. Rainscourt!" whispered some of the promenaders who were coming up the street.

"No! that's not him."

"Yes it is, walking with Mr. Potts! Don't you see his beautiful large dog following him? He never walks without it. An't it a beauty? It's a Polygar dog from the East-Indies. His name is Tippoo."

The house of the curate was but a short distance from the lodgings occupied by Mr. Rainscourt. They soon entered, and were hid from the prying eyes of the idle and the curious.

"I have persuaded Mr. Rainscourt to come and take a family dinner with us, my dear."

"Quite delighted to see him," replied Mrs. Potts, casting a sidelong angry glance at her husband.

Mr. Rainscourt made a slight bow, and threw himself on the sofa, covering his face with his hand, as if the light was hideous.

Mrs. Potts took the opportunity of escaping

by the door, beckoning to her husband as soon as she was outside.

“ And I will go and decant the wine.—Quite in the family way, Mr. Rainscourt—no ceremony. You’ll excuse me,” continued the curate, as he obeyed the summons of his wife, like a school-boy ordered up to be *birched*.

“ Well, my dear,” interrogated Mr. Potts, humbly, as soon as the door was closed. But Mrs. Potts made no reply, until she had led her husband to such a distance from the parlour as she imagined would prevent Mr. Rainscourt from being roused by the high pitch to which she intended to raise her voice.

“ I do declare, Mr. Potts, you are a complete *fool*. Saturday—all the maids washing—and ask him to dinner! There’s positively nothing to eat. It really is too provoking.”

“ Well, my dear, what does it matter? The poor man will, in all probability, not eat a bit—he is so overcome.”

“ So over-fiddlesticked !” replied the lady.

"Grief never hurts the appetite, Mr. Potts; on the contrary, people care more then about a good dinner than at other times. It's the only enjoyment they can have without being accused by the world of want of feeling."

"Well, you know better than I, my dear; but I really think, that if you were to die I could not eat a bit."

"And I tell you, Mr. Potts, I could, if you were to die to-morrow.—So stupid of you!—Sally, run and take off the table-cloth,—it's quite dirty; put on one of the fine damask."

"They will be very large for the table, Ma'am."

"Never mind—be quick, and step next door, and ask the old German to come in and wait at table. He shall have a pint of strong beer."

Sally did as she was bid. Mr. Potts, whose wine had been decanted long before, and Mrs. Potts, who had vented her spleen upon her husband, returned into the parlour together.

“My dear Mr. Potts is so particular about decanting his wine,” observed the lady, with a gracious smile, as she entered—“he is so long about it, and scolds me so, if ever I wish to do it for him.”

Mr. Potts was a little surprised at the last accusation; but as he had long been drilled, he laughed assent. A tedious half hour—during which the lady held all the conversation to herself, for the curate answered only in monosyllabic compliance, and Rainscourt made no answer whatever—elapsed before dinner was announced by the German mercenary who had been subsidized.

“Meinheer, de dinner was upon de table.”

“Come, Mr. Rainscourt,” said the curate, in a persuasive tone.

Rainscourt got up, and without offering his arm to the lady, who had her own bowed-out in readiness, stalked out of the room by the side of Mr. Potts, followed by his wife, who, by her

looks, seemed to imply that she considered that the demise of one woman was no excuse for a breach of politeness towards another.

The covers were removed—two small soles (much *too small* for three people), and a dish of potatoes. “Will you allow me to offer you a little sole, Mr. Rainscourt? I am afraid you will have a very poor dinner.”

Rainscourt bowed in the negative, and the soles disappeared in a very short time between the respective organs of mastication of Mr. and Mrs. Potts.

The dishes of the first course were removed; and the German appeared with a covered dish, followed by Sally, who brought some vegetables, and returned to the kitchen for more.

“I am afraid you will have a very poor dinner,” repeated the lady—“Take off the covers, Sneider.—Will you allow me to help you to a piece of this?”

Rainscourt turned his head round to see if

the object offered was such as to tempt his appetite, and beheld a—*smoking bullock's heart* !

“ My wife, my wife !” exclaimed he, as he darted from his chair ; and covering his face, as if to hide from his sight the object which occasioned the concatenation of ideas, attempted to run out of the room.

But his escape was not so easy. In his hurried movement he had entangled himself with the long table-cloth that trailed on the carpet, and, to the dismay of the party, everything that was on the table was swept off in his retreat ; and as he had blind-folded himself, he ran with such force against the German, who was in the act of receiving a dish from Sally, that, precipitating him against her, they both rolled prostrate on the floor.

“ Ah, mein Got, mein Got !” roared the German, as his face was smothered with the hot stewed peas, a dish of which he was carrying, as he fell on his back.

"Oh, my eye, my eye!" bellowed Sally, as she rolled upon the floor.

"My wife, my wife!" reiterated Rainscourt, as he trampled over them, and secured his retreat.

"And oh, my dinner, my dinner!" ejaculated the curate, as he surveyed the general wreck.

"And oh, you fool, you fool, Mr. Potts!" echoed the lady, with her arms akimbo—"to ask such a man to dine with you!"

"Well, I had no idea that he could have taken it so much to *heart*," replied the curate, meekly.

But we must follow Rainscourt, who—whether really agitated by the circumstance, or, aware that it would be bruited abroad, thought that a display of agitation would be advisable,—proceeded with hurried steps to the promenades, where he glided through the thoughtless crowd with the silent rapidity of a ghost. Having sufficiently awakened the curiosity of

the spectators, he sank down on one of the most retired benches, with his eyes for some time thrown up in contemplation of the fleecy clouds, beyond which kind spirits are supposed to look down, and weep over the follies and inconsistencies of an erring world. Casting his eyes to earth, he beheld—horror upon horrors!—the detested bullock's heart, which his great Polygar dog had seized during the confusion of the dinner scene, and had followed him out with it in his mouth. Finding it too hot to carry, immediately after its seizure, he had for a time laid it down, and had just arrived with it. There he was, not a foot from the bench, his jaws distended with the prize, tossing up his head as if in mockery of his master, and wagging his long-feathered tail.

Rainscourt again made a precipitate retreat to his own lodgings, accompanied by the faithful animal, who, delighted at the unusual rapidity of his master's movements, bounded before him with his treasure, of which he was

much too polite to think of making a repast until a more seasonable opportunity. Rainscourt knocked at the door—as soon as it was opened, the dog bounced up before him, entering the chamber of woe, and, crouching under the table upon which the golden urn was placed, with the heart between his paws, saluted his master with a rap or two of his tail on the carpet, and commenced his dinner.

The servant was summoned, and Rainscourt, without looking at either the urn, the dog, or the man, cried—in an angry tone, “Take that heart, and throw it away immediately.”

“Sir!” replied the domestic, with astonishment, who did not observe the dog, and his occupation.

“Throw it away immediately, Sir—do you hear?”

“Yes, Sir,” replied the man, taking the urn from the table, and quitting the room with it, muttering to himself, as he descended the stairs, “I thought it wouldn’t last long.”

Having obeyed his supposed instructions, he returned—"If you please, Sir, where am I to put the piece of plate?"

"The piece of plate!" Rainscourt turned round, and beheld the vacant urn. It was too much—that evening he ordered the horses, and left Cheltenham for ever.

Various were the reports of the subsequent week. Some said that the fierce dog had broke open the urn, and devoured the embalmed heart. Some told one story—some another; and, before the week was over, all the stories had become incomprehensible.

In one point they all agreed—that Mr. Rainscourt's grief was all humbug.

* * * * *

"'Tis well!—Thou hast 'done thy spiriting gently,' or, for thy tardy coming, I would have sentenced thee to the task of infusing thy spirit into the consistent Eldon, or into ~~King~~ Arthur Duke of Wellington—where, like a viper at a file, thou shouldest have tortured thyself in vain."

CHAPTER IX.

There Leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep,
Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims.

MILTON.

CONGRATULATE me, Reader, that, notwithstanding I have been beating against wind and tide, that is to say, writing this book through all the rolling and pitching, head-ache and indigestion, incident to the confined and unnatural life of a sailor, I have arrived at my last chapter. You may be surprised at this assertion, finding yourself in the middle of the third volume; but such is the fact. Doubtless you have imagined, that, according to the usual method, I had begun at the beginning, and would have finished at the end. Had I done so, this

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work would not have been so near unto a close as, thank Heaven, it is at present. At times I have been gay, at others, sad ; and I am obliged to write according to my humour, which, as variable as the wind, seldom continues in one direction. I have proceeded with this book as I should do if I had had to build a ship. The dimensions of every separate piece of timber I knew by the sheer-draught which laid before me. It therefore made no difference upon which I began, as they all were to be cut out before I bolted them together. I should have taken them just as they came to hand, and sorted them for their respective uses. My keel is laid on the slips, and my stern is raised ; these will do for futtocks—these for beams. I lay those aside for riders ; and out of these gnarled and twisted pieces of oak, I select my knees. It is of little consequence upon which my adze is first employed. Thus it was that a fit of melancholy produced the last half of the third volume ; and my stern-post,

transoms, and fashion-pieces, were framed out almost before my floor-timbers were laid.

But you will perceive that this is of no consequence. All are now bolted together ; and, with the exception of a little dubbing away here and there, a little gingerbread work, and a coat of paint, she is ready for launching.

Now all is ready.—Give me the bottle of wine—and as she rushes into the sea of public opinion, upon which her merits are to be ascertained, I christen her “THE KING’S OWN.”

And now that she is afloat, I must candidly acknowledge that I am not exactly pleased with her. To speak technically, her figure-head is not thrown out enough. To translate this observation into plain English, I find, on turning over the different chapters, that my hero, as I have often designated him, is not sufficiently the hero of my tale. As soon as he is shipped on board of a man-of-war, he becomes as insignificant as a midshipman must unavoidably be, from his humble situation. I see the error—

yet I cannot correct it, without overthrowing all "rules and regulations," which I cannot persuade myself to do, even in a work of fiction. Trammelled as I am by "the service," I can only plead guilty to what it is impossible to amend without commencing *de novo*—for every thing, and every body, must find their level on board of a King's ship.

Well, I've one comfort left—Sir Walter Scott has never succeeded in making a hero; or, in other words, his best characters are not those which commonly go under the designation of "the hero." I am afraid there is something irreclaimably insipid in these *preux chevaliers*.

But I must go in search of the *Aspasia*. There she is, with studding-sails set, about fifty miles to the southward of the Cape of Good Hope; and I think that when the reader has finished this chapter, he will be inclined to surmise that the author, as well as the *Aspasia*, has most decidedly "doubled the Cape."

The frigate was standing her course before

a light breeze, at the rate of four or five knots an hour, and Captain M—— was standing at the break of the gangway, talking with the first-lieutenant, when the man stationed at the mast-head called out, "A rock on the lee-bow!" The *Télémaque* shoal, which is supposed to exist somewhere to the southward of the Cape, but whose situation has never been ascertained, had just before been the subject of their conversation.

Startled at the intelligence, Captain M—— ordered the studding-sails to be taken in, and, hailing the man at the mast-head, inquired how far the rock was distant from the ship.

"I can see it off the fore-yard," answered Bowling, the master, who had immediately ascended the rigging upon the report.

The first-lieutenant now went aloft, and soon brought it down to the lower ratlines. In a few minutes it was distinctly seen from the deck of the frigate.

The ship's course was altered three or four points, that no risk might be incurred; and

Captain M——, directing the people aloft to keep a sharp look-out for any change in the colour of the water, continued to near the supposed danger in a slanting direction.

The rock appeared to be about six or seven feet above the water's edge, with a base of four or five feet in diameter. To the great surprise of all parties, there was no apparent change in colour to indicate that they shoaled their water; and it was not until they hove to within two cables' length, and the cutter was ordered to be cleared away to examine it, that they perceived that the object of their scrutiny was in motion. This was now evident, and in a direction crossing the stern of the ship.

"I think that it is some kind of fish," observed Seymour; "I saw it raise its tail a little out of the water."

And such it proved to be, as it shortly afterwards passed the ship within half a cable's length. It was a large spermaceti whale, on the head of which some disease had formed an

enormous spongy excrescence, which had the appearance of a rock, and was so buoyant that, although the animal made several attempts as it approached the ship, it could not sink under water. Captain M——, satisfied that it really was as we have described, again made sail, and pursued his course.

“It is very strange, and very important,” observed he, “that a disease of any description can scarcely be confined to one individual, but must pervade the whole species. This circumstance may account for the many rocks reported to have been seen in various parts of the southern hemisphere, and which have never been afterwards fallen in with. A more complete deception I never witnessed.”

“Had we hauled off sooner, and not have examined it, I should have had no hesitation in asserting, most confidently, that we had seen a rock,” answered the first-lieutenant.

Captain M—— went below, and was, soon after, at table with the first-lieutenant and Mac-

allan, who had been invited to dine in the cabin. After dinner, the subject was again introduced.

“I have my doubts, Sir,” observed the first-lieutenant, “whether I shall ever venture to tell the story in England. I never should be believed.”

“*Le vrai n'est pas toujours vraisemblable,*” answered Captain M——; “and I am afraid that too often a great illiberality is shewn towards travellers, who, after having encountered great difficulties and dangers, have the mortification not to be credited upon their return. Although credulity is to be guarded against, I do not know a greater proof of ignorance than refusing to believe anything because it does not exactly coincide with one's own ideas. The more confined these may be, from want of education or knowledge, the more incredulous people are apt to become. Two of the most enterprising travellers of modern days, Bruce and Le Vaillant, were ridiculed and discredited upon their return. Subsequent travellers, who went

the same track as the former, with a view to confute, were obliged to corroborate his assertions; and all who have followed the latter, have acknowledged the correctness of his statements."

"Your observations remind me of the story of the old woman and her grandson," replied the first-lieutenant. "You recollect it, I presume."

"Indeed I do not," said Captain M—; "pray favour me with it."

The first-lieutenant then narrated, with a considerable degree of humour, the following story:—

"A lad, who had been some years at sea, returned home to his aged grandmother, who was naturally curious to hear his adventures.—'Now, Jack,' said the old woman, 'tell me all you've seen, and tell me the most wonderful things first.'"

"'Well, granny, when we were in the Red Sea we anchored close to the shore, and when we hove the anchor up, there was a chariot wheel hanging to it.'"

“ ‘Oh ! Jack, Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red Sea, you know ; that proves that the Bible is all true. Well, Jack, and what else did you see ?’

“ ‘Why, granny, when I was in the West Indies, I saw whole mountains of sugar, and the rivers between them were all rum.’

“ ‘True, true,’ said the old woman, smacking her lips ; ‘we get all the sugar and rum from there, you know. Pray, Jack, did you ever see a mermaid ?’

“ ‘Why no, mother, but I’ve seen a merman.’

“ ‘Well, let’s hear, Jack.’

“ ‘Why, mother, when we anchored to the northward of St. Kitt’s, one Sunday morning a voice called us from alongside, and when we looked over, there was a merman just come to the top of the water ; he stroked down his hair, and touched it, as we do our hats, to the captain, and told him that he would feel much obliged to him to trip his anchor, as it had been let go

just before the door of his house below, which they could not open in consequence, and his wife would be too late to go to church.'

" 'God bless me !' says the old woman ; ' why they're christians, I do declare !—And now, Jack, tell me something more.'

" Jack, whose invention was probably exhausted, then told her that he had seen hundreds of fish flying in the air.

" 'Come, come, Jack,' said the old woman, ' now you're *bamming* me—don't attempt to put such stories off on your old granny. The chariot wheel I can believe, because its likely ; the sugar and rum I know to be true ; and also the merman, for I have seen pictures of them. But as for fish flying in the air, Jack—that's a lie.' "

" Excellent," said Captain M——; " then the only part that was true she rejected, believing all the monstrous lies that he had coined."

" If any unknown individual," observed

Macallan, "and not Captain Cook, had reported the existence of such an animal as the ornithorynchus, or duck-billed platypus, without bringing home the specimen as a proof, who would have credited his statement?"

"No one," replied Captain M——. "Still, such is the scepticism of the present age, that travellers must be content with having justice done to them after they are dead."

"That's but cold comfort, Sir," replied the first-lieutenant, rising from the table, which movement was immediately followed by the remainder of the guests, who bowed and quitted the cabin.

NOTE—It is singular that the almost incredible story in the above chapter is, perhaps, the only real fact in the whole book. It will be found in the log of the ship, and signed by all the officers; and yet many of my readers will be inclined to reject this, and believe a considerable portion of the remainder of the composition to have been drawn from living characters; if so, they will be like the *old woman*.

CHAPTER X.

Cym. Guiderius had
Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star.

Bel. This is he,
Who hath upon him still that stamp.

SHAKSPEARE.

WHEN Mr. Rainscourt left Cheltenham, he wrote a hasty note to the M^{rs} Elvinas, requesting that they would take charge of Emily, whose presence would be necessary at the hall—and when they had arranged their own affairs, would bring her with them over to Ireland, where it was his intention to reside for some time. A few days after Rainscourt had quitted

Cheltenham, Emily, who, since her mother's death, had remained with the McElvinas, was accompanied by them to that home which, for the first time, she returned to with regret.

It may be inquired by the reader, whether Rainscourt was not harassed by his conscience. I never heard that he shewed any outward signs. Conscience has been described as a most importunate monitor, paying no respect to persons, and making cowards of us all. Now, as far as I have been able to judge from external evidence, there is not a greater courtier than conscience. It is true, that, when in adversity, he upbraids us, and holds up the catalogue of our crimes so close to our noses, that we cannot help reading every line. It is true, that, when suffering with disease, and terrified with the idea of going we know not where, he assails the enfeebled mind and body, and scares away the little resolution we have left. But in the hey-day of youth, in the vigour of health, with the

means of administering to our follies, and adding daily and hourly to our crimes, he "never mentions hell to ears polite." In fact, he never attacks a man who has more than ten thousand a year. Like a London tradesman, he never presents his bill as long as you give him fresh orders that will increase it; but once prove yourself to be 'cleaned out,' by no longer swelling the amount, and he pounces upon you, and demands a post-obit bond upon the next world, which, like all others, will probably be found very disagreeable and inconvenient to liquidate. Conscience, therefore, is not an honest, sturdy adviser, but a sneaking scoundrel, who allows you to run into his debt, never caring to tell you, as a caution, but rather concealing your bill from you, as long as there is a chance of your increasing its length—satisfied that, eventually, he must be paid in some shape or other.

The M^cElvinas, who could not leave Emily by herself, took up their abode at the hall,

until the necessary arrangements had been completed, and then removed with her to the cottage, that they might attend to their own affairs. Emily was deeply affected at the loss of her mother. She had always been a kind and indulgent friend, who had treated her more as an equal than as one subject to authority and controul. The McElvinas were anxious to remove Emily from the hall, where every object that presented itself formed a link of association with her loss, and trifles in themselves, would occasion a fresh burst of grief from the affectionate and sorrowful girl. And she may be pardoned when I state, that, perhaps, the bitterest tears which were shed were those when she threw herself on that sofa where she had remained after the abrupt departure of William Seymour.

The vicar hastened to offer his condolence; and finding that Emily was as resigned as could be expected, after a long visit walked out with McElvina, that he might have a more

detailed account of the unfortunate event. McElvina related it circumstantially, but without communicating the suspicions which the story of the grooms had occasioned, for he was aware that the vicar was too charitable to allow anything but positive evidence to be of weight in an accusation so degrading to human nature.

“It is strange,” observed the vicar, very gravely, “but it seems as if a fatality attended the possessors of this splendid estate. The death of Admiral de Courcy was under most painful circumstances, without a friend or relative to close his eyes; it was followed by that of his immediate heir, who was drowned as soon almost as the property devolved to him—and I, who was appointed to be his guardian, never beheld my charge. Now we have another violent death of the possessor—and all within the space of twelve or thirteen years. You have probably heard something of the singular history of the former heir to the estate?”

“ I heard you state that he was drowned at sea ; but nothing further.”

“ Or, rather, supposed to be, for we never had proof positive. He was sent away in a prize, which never was heard of ; and, although there is no confirmation of the fact, I have no doubt but he was lost. I do not know when I was so much distressed as at the death of that child. There was a peculiarity of incident in his history, the facts of which I have not as yet communicated to any one, as there are certain points which even distant branches of the family may wish to keep concealed—yet, upon a promise of secrecy, Mr. McElvina, I will impart them to you.”

The promise being given, the vicar commenced with the history of Admiral de Courcy,—his treatment of his wife and children,—the unfortunate marriage, and more unfortunate demise of Edward Peters, or rather of Edward de Courcy—the acknowledgment of his grandson by Admiral de Courcy on his death-bed—

the account of Adams—his death—the boy being sent away in a prize, and drowned at sea. “I have all the particulars in writing,” continued the good man, “and the necessary documents; and his identity was easy to be proved by the mark of the broad-arrow imprinted on his shoulder by old Adams.”

“Heavens! is it possible?” exclaimed M^cElvina, grasping the arm of the vicar.

“What do you mean?”

“Mean!—I mean that the boy is alive—has been in your company within the last two years.”

“That boy?”

“Yes, that boy—that boy is William Seymour.”

“Merciful God! how inscrutable are thy ways!” exclaimed the vicar, with astonishment and reverence. “Explain to me, my dear Sir, how can you establish your assertion?”

If the reader will refer back to the circumstance of the vicar calling upon Captain M——,

he will observe, that, upon being made acquainted with the loss of the child, he was so much shocked that he withdrew without imparting the particulars to one who was a perfect stranger; and, on the other hand, Captain M——, when Seymour again made his appearance, after an interval of three years, not having been put in possession of these facts, or even knowing the vicar's address or name, had no means of communicating the intelligence of the boy's recovery.

"I must now, Sir," said M^cElvina to the vicar, "return the confidence which you have placed in me, under the same promise of secrecy, by making you acquainted with some particulars of *my* former life, at which I acknowledge I have reason to blush, and which nothing but the interests of William Seymour would have induced me to disclose."

M^cElvina then acknowledged his having formerly been engaged in smuggling—his picking

up the boy from the wreck—his care of him for three years—the capture of his vessel by Captain M——, and the circumstances that had induced Captain M—— to take the boy under his protection. The mark was as legible as ever, and there could be no doubt of his identity being satisfactorily established.

The vicar listened to the narration with the interest which it deserved, and acknowledged his conviction of the clearness of the evidence, by observing—

“This will be a heavy blow to our dear Emily.”

“Not a very heavy one, I imagine,” replied M^cElvina, who immediately relieved the mind of the worthy man by communicating the attachment between them, and the honourable behaviour of Seymour.

“How very strange this is!” replied the vicar. “It really would be a good subject for a novel. I only trust that, like all inventions of the kind, it may end as happily.”

"I trust so too; but let us now consider what must be done."

"I should advise his being sent for immediately."

"And so should I; but I expect, from the last accounts which I received from him, that the ship will have left her station to return home before our letters can arrive there. My plan is, to keep quiet until his return. The facts are known, and can be established by us alone. Let us immediately take such precautions as our legal advisers may think requisite, that proofs may not be wanting in case of our sudden demise; but we must not act until he arrives in the country, for Mr. Rainscourt is a difficult and dangerous person to deal with."

"You are right," replied the vicar; "when do you leave this for Ireland?"

"In a few days—but I shall be ready to appear the moment that I hear of the ship's arrival. In the meantime, I shall make the necessary affidavits, in case of accident."

M^cElvina and the vicar separated. M^cElvina, like a dutiful husband, communicated the joyful intelligence to his wife, and his wife, to soothe Emily under her affliction, although she kept the secret, now talked of Seymour. In a few days the arrangements were made—the cottage was put into an agent's hands to be disposed of; and, quitting with regret an abode in which they had passed some years of unalloyed happiness, they set off for Galway, where they found Rainscourt on their arrival. Consigning his daughter to his care, they removed to their own house, which was on the property which M^cElvina had purchased, and about four miles distant from the castle. M^cElvina's name was a passport to the hearts of his tenants, who declared that the head of the house had come unto his own again. That he had the true eye of the M^cElvinas, there was no mistaking, for no other family had such an eye. That his honour had gladdened their hearts by seeing the pro-

perty into the ould family again—as ould a one as any in ould Ireland.

M^cElvina, like a wise man, held his tongue; and then they talked of their misfortunes—of the bad potatoe crop—of arrears of rent—one demand was heaped upon another, until M^cElvina was ultimately obliged to refer them all to the agent, whom he requested to be as lenient as possible.

Emily was now reinstated in the castle, where she had passed the first years of her existence, and found that all in it was new, except her old nurse, Norah. The contiguity of the M^cElvinas was a source of comfort to her, for she could not admire the dissipated companions of her father. Her life was solitary—but she had numerous resources within herself, and the winter passed rapidly away.

In the spring, she returned to London with her father, who proudly introduced his daughter. Many were the solicitations of those who

admired her person, or her purse. But in vain—her heart was pre-engaged; and it was with pleasure that she returned to Ireland, after the season was over, to renew her intimacy with the M^cElvinas, and to cherish, in her solitude, the remembrance of the handsome and high-minded William Seymour,

CHAPTER XI.

And now with sails declin'd,
The wandering vessel drove before the wind ;
Toss'd and retoss'd aloft, and then alow ;
Nor port they seek, nor certain course they know,
But every moment wait the coming blow.

DRYDEN.

THREE days after the *Aspasia* had taken a fresh departure from the Western Isles, a thick fog came on, the continuance of which prevented them from ascertaining their situation by the chronometer. The wind, which blew favourably from the south-east, had, by their dead reckoning, driven them as far north as the latitude of Ushant, without their once having had an oppor-

tunity of finding out the precise situation of the frigate. The wind now shifted more to the eastward, and increasing to a gale, Captain M—— determined upon making Cape Clear, on the southern coast of Ireland; but having obtained sights for the chronometers, it was discovered that they were far to the westward of the reckoning, and had no chance of making the point of land which they had intended. For many days they had to contend against strong easterly gales, with a heavy sea, and had sought shelter under the western coast of Ireland.

The weather moderating, and the wind veering again to the southward, the frigate's head was put towards the shore, that they might take a fresh departure; but scarcely had they time to congratulate themselves upon the prospect of soon gaining a port, when there was every appearance of another gale coming on from the south-west. As this was from a quarter which, in all probability, would scarcely allow the frigate to weather Mizen-head, she was hauled off

on the larboard tack, and all sail put on her which prudence would permit in the heavy cross sea, which had not yet subsided.

“ We shall have it all back again, I am afraid, Sir,” observed the master, looking to windward at the horizon, which, black as pitch, served as a back-ground to relieve the white curling tops of the seas. “ Shall we have the trysails up, and bend them ?”

“ The boatswain is down after them now, Pearce,” said the first-lieutenant.

“ The weather is indeed threatening,” replied the captain, as he turned from the weather-gangway, where he had been standing, and wiped the spray from his face, with which the atmosphere was charged ; “ and I perceive that the glass is very low. Send the small sails down out of the tops ; as soon as the staysail is on her, lower the gaff, and furl the spanker ; the watch will do. When we go to quarters, we’ll double-breech the guns. Let the carpenter have his tarpaulins ready for battening down—

send for the boatswain, and let the boats on the booms be well secured. Is that eight bells striking? Then pipe to supper first; and, Mr. Bully," added Captain M——, as he descended the companion ladder, "they may as well hook the rolling-tackles again."

"Ay, ay, Sir," replied Bully, as the captain disappeared. "I say, master, the skipper don't like it—I'll swear that, by his look as he turned from the gangway. He was as stern as the figure head of the Mars."

"That's just his way; if even the elements threaten him, he returns the look of defiance."

"He does so," replied the master, who appeared to be unusally grave, (as if in sad presentiment of evil). "I've watched him often.—But it's no use—they mind but one."

"Very true—neither can you conciliate them by smiling; the only way to look is *to look sharp out*. Eh, master!" said the first-lieutenant, slapping him familiarly on the back.

"Come, no skylarking, Bully—it's easy to

tell the skipper isn't on deck. I expect as much sleep to-night as a dog vane—these south-westerns generally last their three days."

"I am glad to hear that," said Merrick, a youngster, with an oval laughing face, who, being a favourite with both the officers, had ventured to the weather-side of the quarter-deck in the absence of the captain.

"And why, Mr. Merrick?" inquired the master, gravely.

"Oh! it's my morning-watch to-morrow. We shall be all snug; no sails to trim, no sails to set, and no holy stoning the deck—nothing to do but to keep myself warm under the weather-bulwarks."

"Ah, you idle scamp," said the first-lieutenant, smiling.

"So, young man, you wish us to be on deck all night, that you may have nothing to do in the morning. The day will come when you will know what responsibility is," retorted Pearce.

"If you're up all night, Sir," replied the

boy, laughing, "you'll want a cup of coffee in the morning watch. I shall come in for my share of that, you know."

"Ah, well, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good," observed Pearce; "but you are young to be selfish."

"Indeed I am not selfish, Sir," replied the boy, hurt at the rebuke from one who had been kind to him, and to whom he was attached. "I was only joking. I only meant," continued he, feeling deeply, but not at the moment able to describe his feelings—"I only said—oh! d—n the coffee."

"And now you're *only* swearing, I suppose," replied the master.

"Well, it's enough to make a saint swear to be accused of being selfish, and by you too."

"Well, well, youngster, there's enough of it—you spoke without thinking. Go down to your tea now, and you shall have your share of the coffee to-morrow, if there is any."

After supper the watch was called, and the directions given by the captain to the first-lieutenant were punctually obeyed. The drum then beat to quarters earlier than usual; the guns were doubly secured; the dead lights shipped abaft; the number of inches of water in the well made known by the carpenter; the sobriety of the men ascertained by the officers stationed at their respective guns; and every thing that was ordered to be executed, or to be held in readiness, in the several departments, reported to the captain.

“Now, Mr. Bully, we’ll make her all snug for the night. Furl the fore and mizen-topsail, and close reef the main—that, with the foresail, fore-staysail, and trysail, will be enough for her.”

“Had we not better reef the foresail, Sir?” said Pearce. “I suspect we shall have to do it before twelve o’clock, if we do not now.”

“Very right, Mr. Pearce—we will do so. Is the main-trysail bent?”

"All bent, Sir, and the sheet aft."

"Then beat a retreat, and turn the hands up—shorten sail."

This duty was performed, and the hammocks piped down as the last glimmering of daylight disappeared.

The gale increased rapidly during the first watch. Large drops of rain mingled with the spray, distant thunder rolled to windward, and occasional gleams of lightning pierced through the intense darkness of the night. The officers and men of the watches below, with sealed eyes and thoughtless hearts, were in their hammocks, trusting to those on deck for security. But the night was terrific, and the captain, first lieutenant, and master, from the responsibility of their situations, continued on deck, as did many of the officers termed idlers, such as the surgeon and purser, who, although their presence was not required, felt no inclination to sleep."

By four o'clock in the morning the gale was

at its height. The lightning darted through the sky in every direction, and the thunder-claps for the time overpowered the noise of the wind as it roared through the shrouds. The sea, striking on the fore-channels, was thrown aft with violence over the quarter-deck and waist of the ship, as she laboured through the agitated sea.

“If this lasts much longer we must take the foresail off of her, and give her the main-stay-sail,” said Bully to the master.

“We must, indeed,” replied the captain, who was standing by them; “but the day is breaking. Let us wait a little—ease her, quarter-master.”

“Ease her it is, Sir.”

At day-light, the gale having rather increased than shewn any symptoms of abating, the captain was giving directions for the foresail to be taken off, when the seaman who was stationed to look out on the lee-gangway, cried out, “A sail on the lee-beam!”

"A sail on the lee-beam, Sir !" reported the officer of the watch to the captain, as he held on by a rope with one hand, and touched his hat with the other.

"Here, youngster, tell the sentry at the cabin door to give you my deck glass," said Captain M—— to Merrick, who was one of the midshipmen of the morning watch.

"She's a large ship, Sir—main and mizen-masts both gone," reported Bully, who had mounted up three or four ratlines of the main rigging.

The midshipman brought up the glass ; and the captain, first passing his arm round the fore-brace to secure himself from falling to leeward with the lurching of the ship, as soon as he could bring the strange vessel into the field of the glass, (no easy task under such circumstances, except to the practised eye of a sailor), exclaimed, "A line of battle ship, by Heavens ! and if I am any judge of a hull, or the painting of a ship, she is no Englishman."

Other glasses were now produced, and the opinion of the captain was corroborated by that of the officers on deck.

“Keep fast the foresail, Mr. Bully. We’ll edge down to her. Quarter-master, see the signal-haulyards all clear.”

The captain went down to his cabin, while the frigate was kept away as he directed, the master standing at the conn. He soon came up again: “Hoist No. 3 at the fore, and No. 8 at the main. We’ll see if she can answer the private signal.”

It was done, and the frigate rolling heavily in the trough of the sea, and impelled by the furious elements, rapidly closed with the stranger.

In less than an hour they were within half a mile of her; but the private signal remained unanswered.

“Now then bring her to the wind, Mr. Pearce,” said Captain M——, who had his glass upon the vessel.

The frigate was luffed handsomely to the wind, not however without shipping a heavy sea. The gale, which, during the time that she was kept away before the wind, had the appearance, which it always has, of having decreased in force, now that she presented her broadside to it, roared again in all its fury.

“Call the gunner—clear away the long gun forward—try with the rammer whether the shot has started from the cartridge, and then fire across the bows of that vessel.”

The men cast loose the gun, and the gunner taking out the bed and coin, to obtain the greatest elevation to counteract the heel of the frigate, watched the lurch, and pitched the shot close to the forefoot of the disabled vessel, who immediately shewed French colours over her weather-quarter.

“French colours, Sir!” cried two or three at a breath.

“Beat to quarters, Mr. Bully,” said Captain M——.

“ Shall we cast loose the main-deck guns ?”

“ No, no—that will be useless ; we shall not be able to fire them, and we may have them through the sides. We'll try her with the caronades.”

It was easy to perceive, without the assistance of a glass, that the men on board the French line-of-battle ship were attempting, in no very scientific manner, to get a jury-mast up abaft, that by putting after-sail on her they might keep their vessel to the wind. The foresail they dare not take off, as, without any sail to keep her steady, the remaining mast would in all probability have rolled over the side ; but without after-sail, the ship would not keep to the wind, and the consequence was, that she was two points off the wind, forging fast through the water, notwithstanding that the helm was hard a-lee.

“ Where are we now, Mr. Pearce ?” interrogated the Captain—“ about eight or nine leagues from the land ?”

“ Say seven leagues, Sir, if you please,” re-

plied the master, "until I can give you an exact answer," and he descended the companion ladder to work up his reckoning.

"She's leaving us, Mr. Bully—keep more away, and run abreast of her. Now, my lads, watch the weather roll,—round and grape—don't throw a shot away—aim at the quarter-deck ports. If we can prevent her from getting up her jury-masts, she is done for."

"As for the matter of that," said the quarter-master, who was captain of one of the quarter-deck guns, "we might save our shot. They havn't *nouse* enough to get them up if left all to themselves—however, here's a slap at her."

The frigate had now closed within three cables lengths of the line-of-battle ship, and considering the extreme difficulty of hitting any mark under such disadvantages, a well directed fire was thrown in by her disciplined seamen.

The enemy attempted to return the fire from the weather main-deck guns, but it was a service of such difficulty and danger, that he more than

once abandoned it. Two or three guns disappearing from the ports, proved that they had either rolled to leeward, or had been precipitated down the hatchways. This was indeed the case, and the French sailors were so much alarmed from the serious disasters that had already ensued, that they either quitted their quarters, or, afraid to stand behind the guns when they were fired, no aim was taken, and the shots were thrown away. Had the two ships been equally manned, the disadvantage, under all the misfortunes of the Frenchman, would have been on the side of the frigate; but the gale itself was more than sufficient employment for the undisciplined crew of the line-of-battle ship. The fire from the frigate was kept up with vigour, although the vessel lurched so heavily as often to throw the men who were stationed at the guns into the lee-scuppers, rolling one over the other in the water with which the decks were floated; but this was only a subject of merriment, and they resumed their task with the careless spirit

of British seamen. The fire, difficult as it was to take any precise aim, had the effect intended, that of preventing the French vessel from rigging any thing like a jury-mast. Occasionally the line-of-battle ship kept more away, to avoid the grape, by increasing her distance ; but the frigate's course was regulated by that of her opponent, and she continued her galling pursuit.

CHAPTER XII.

Heaven's loud artillery began to play,
And wrath divine in dreadful peals convey ;
Darkness and raging winds their terrors join,
And storms of rain with storms of fire combine.
Some run ashore upon the shoaly land.

BLACKMORE.

It was no time for man to war against man.
The powers of Heaven were loose, and in all
their fury. The wind howled, the sea raged,
the thunder stunned, and the lightning blinded.
The Eternal was present, in all his majesty ;
yet pigmy mortals were contending. But Cap-
tain M—— was unmoved, unawed, unchecked ;
and the men, stimulated by his example, and

careless of every thing, heeded not the warning of the elements.

“ Sit on your powder-box, and keep it dry, you young monkey,” said the quarter-master who was captain of the gun, to the lad who had the cartridge ready for reloading it. The fire upon the French vessel was warmly kept up, when the master again came on deck, and stated to the captain, that they could not be more than four leagues from a dead lee-shore, which, by keeping away after the French vessel, they must be nearing fast.

“ She cannot stand this long, Sir. Look to windward—the gale increases—there is a fresh hand at the ‘ bellows.’ ”

The wind now redoubled its fury, and the rain, that took a horizontal, instead of a perpendicular direction, from the force of the wind, fed the gale instead of lulling it. The thunder rolled—and the frigate was so drenched with water, that the guns were primed and reprimed, without the fire communicating to

the powder, which in a few seconds was saturated with the rain and spray. This was but of little consequence, as the squall and torrents of rain had now hid the enemy from their sight. "Look out for her, my men, as soon as the squall passes over," cried Captain M——.

A flash of lightning, that blinded them for a time, was followed by a peal of thunder, so close, that the timbers of the ship trembled with the vibration of the air. A second hostile meeting of electricity took place, and the fluid darted down the side of the frigate's mainmast, passing through the quarter-deck in the direction of the powder-magazine. Captain M——, the first-lieutenant, master, and fifty or sixty of the men, were struck down by the violence of the shock. Many were killed, more wounded, and the rest, blinded and stunned, staggered, and fell to leeward with the lurching of the vessel. Gradually, those who were only stunned recovered their legs, and amongst the first was the captain of the frigate. As soon as

he could recal his scattered senses, with his usual presence of mind he desired the "fire-roll" to be beat by the drummer, and sent down to ascertain the extent of the mischief. A strong sulphureous smell pervaded the ship, and flew up the hatchways; and such was the confusion, that some minutes elapsed before any report could be made. It appeared, that the electric fluid had passed close to the spirit-room and after-magazine, and escaped through the bottom of the vessel. Before the report had been made, the captain had given directions for taking the wounded down to the surgeon, and the bodies of the dead under the half-deck. The electric matter had divided at the foot of the main-mast, to which it had done no injury—one part, as before mentioned, having gone below, while the other, striking the iron bolt that connected the lower part of the main-bitts, had thence passed to the two fore-mast quarter-deck carronades, firing them both off at the same moment that it killed

and wounded the men who were stationed at them. The effects of the lightning were various. The men who were close to the foot of the main-mast, holding on by the ropes belayed to the main-bitts, were burnt to a cinder, and their blackened corpses lay smoking in the remnants of their clothes, emitting an overpowering ammoniacal stench. Some were only wounded in the arm or leg ; but the scathed member was shrivelled up, and they were borne down the hatchway, howling with intolerable pain. The most awful effects were at the guns. The captains of the two carronades, and several men that were near them, were dead—but had not the equipoise of the bodies been lost by the violent motion of the ship, their dreadful fate would not have been immediately perceived. Not an injury appeared—every muscle was fixed to the same position as when the fluid entered—the same expression of countenance, the same energy of character, the eye-like life, as it watched the sight on the

gun, the body bent forward, the arm extended, the fingers still holding the lanyard attached to the lock. Nothing but palpable evidence could convince one that they were dead.

The boy attending with his powder-box, upon which he had sat by the directions of the captain of the gun, was desired by Captain M—— to jump up and assist the men in carrying down the wounded. He sat still on his box, supported between the capstan and the stanchions of the companion hatchway, his eyes apparently fixed upon the captain, but not moving in obedience to the order, although repeated in an angry tone—He was dead !

During the confusion and panic attending this catastrophe, the guns had been deserted. As soon as the wounded men had been taken below, the captain desired the boatswain to pipe to quarters, for the drummer, when called to beat the “fire-roll,” had, with others, been summoned to his last account. The guns were

again manned, and the firing recommenced ; but a want of energy, and the melancholy silence which prevailed, evidently shewed that the men, although they obeyed, did not obey cheerfully.

“ Another pull of the fore-staysail, Mr. Hardsett,” cried Captain M——, through his speaking-trumpet.

“ Ay, ay, Sir ; clap on him, my lads,” replied the boatswain, holding his call between his teeth, as he lent the assistance of his powerful frame to the exertions of the men. The sheet was aft, and belayed, and the boatswain indulged in muttered quotations from the Scriptures :—“ He bringeth forth the clouds from the ends of the world, and sendeth forth lightnings, with rain ; bringing the winds out of his treasures. He smote the first-born of Egypt.”

The first-lieutenant and master were in close consultation to windward. The captain stood at the lee-gangway, occasionally desiring the

quarter-master at the conn to alter the course, regulating his own by that of his disabled enemy.

“I’ll speak to him, then,” exclaimed Pearce, as the conference broke up, and he went over to leeward to the captain.

“Captain M——, I have had the honour to serve under your command some time, and I trust you will allow that I have never shewn any want of zeal in the discharge of my duty?”

“No, Mr. Pearce,” replied the captain, with a grave smile; “without compliment, you never have.”

“Then, Sir, you will not be affronted at, or ascribe to unworthy motives, a remark which I wish to make.”

“Most certainly not; as I am persuaded that you will never make any observation inconsistent with your duty, or infringing upon the rules of the service.”

“Then, Sir, with all due submission to you, I do think, and it is the opinion of

the other officers as well, that our present employment, under existing circumstances, is tempting, if not insulting, the Almighty. Look at the sky, look at the raging sea, hear the wind, and call to mind the effects of the lightning not one half-hour since. When the Almighty appears in all his wrath, in all his tremendous majesty, is it a time for us poor mortals to be at strife? What is our feeble artillery, what is the roar of our cannon, compared to the withering and consuming artillery of Heaven! Has he not told us so,—and do not the ship's company, by their dispirited conduct since the vessel was struck, acknowledge it? The officers all feel it, Sir. Is it not presumptuous,—with all due submission, Sir, is it not wicked?"

"I respect your feelings as a christian, and as a man," replied Captain M—; "but I must differ with you. That the Almighty power appears, I grant; and I feel, as you do, that God is great, and man weak and impotent.

But that this storm has been raised—that this thunder rolls—that this lightning has blasted us, as a *warning*, I deny. The causes emanate from the Almighty; but he leaves the effects to the arrangements of Nature, which is governed by immutable laws. Had there been no other vessel in sight, this lightning would still have struck us; and this storm will not cease, even if we were to neglect what I consider a duty to our country.”

The master touched his hat, and made no answer. It was now about one o'clock, and the horizon to leeward, clearing up a little, shewed the land upon the lee-beam.

“Land ho !” cried one of the men.

“Indeed !” observed the captain to the master—“we are nearer than you thought.”

“Something, Sir, perhaps; but recollect how many hours you have kept away after this vessel.”

“Very true,” rejoined the captain; “and the

in-draught into the bargain. I am not surprised at it."

"Shall we haul our wind, Sir? we are on a dead lee-shore."

"No, Mr. Pearce, not until the fate of that vessel is decided."

"Land on the weather-bow!" reported the boatswain from the forecastle.

"Indeed!" said the captain,—“then the affair will soon be decided.”

The vessels still continued their course in a slanting direction towards the land, pursuer and pursued running on to destruction; but, although various indirect hints were given by the first-lieutenant and others, Captain M—— turned a deaf ear. He surveyed the dangers which presented themselves, and frowned upon them, as if in defiance.

CHAPTER XIII.

An universal cry resounds aloud,
The sailors run in heaps, a helpless crowd ;
Art fails and courage falls ; no succour near ;
As many waves, as many deaths appear.

OVID. *Dryden's Translation.*

HOWEVER we may be inclined to extend our admiration to the feelings of self-devotion which governed the conduct of Captain M——, it cannot be a matter of surprise that the officers of the frigate did not coincide with his total indifference to self, in the discharge of his duty. Murmur they did not ; but they looked at each other, at the captain, and at the peril-

ous situation of the vessel, in silence, and with a restless change of position that indicated their anxiety. Macallan was below, attending to the wounded men, or he would probably have been deputed by the others to have remonstrated with the captain. A few minutes more had elapsed, when the master again addressed him:

“I am afraid, Sir, if we continue to stand on, that we shall lose the frigate,” said he, respectfully touching his hat.

“Be it so,” replied Captain M——; “the enemy will lose a line-of-battle-ship; our country will be the gainer, when the account is balanced.”

“I must be permitted to doubt that, Sir; the value of the enemy’s ship is certainly greater; but there are other considerations.”

“What are they?”

“The value of the respective officers and ships’ companies, which must inevitably share the fate of the two vessels. The captain of that ship is not *worth his salt*. It would be

politic to let him live and continue to command. His ship will always be ours, when we want it; and in the event of a general action, he would make a gap in the enemy's line, which might prove of the greatest importance. Now, Sir, without drawing the parallel any further,—without taking into consideration the value of the respective officers and men,—I must take the liberty of observing, that, on your account alone, England will be no gainer by the loss of both vessels and crews.”

“Thank you for the compliment, which, as it is only feather-weight, I will allow to be thrown into the scale. But I do not agree with you. I consider war but as a game of chess, and will never hesitate to sacrifice a *knight* for a *castle*. Provided that *castle* is lost, Mr. Pearce,” continued the captain, pointing to the French vessel, “this little frigate, if necessary, shall be *knight-errant* enough to bear her company.”

“Very good, Sir,” replied Pearce, again

touching his hat ; "as master of this ship, I considered it my duty to state my opinion."

"You have done your duty, Mr. Pearce, and I thank you for it ; but I have also my duties to perform. One of them (according to my ideas of the service) is, not to allow the lives of one ship's company, however brave and well disciplined (and such I must allow to be the one I have the honour to command), to interfere with the general interests of the country we contend for. When a man enters his Majesty's service, his life is no longer to be considered his own ; it belongs to his King and country, and is at their disposal. If we are lost, there will be no great difficulty in collecting another ship's company in old England, as brave and as good as this. Officers as experienced are anxiously waiting for employment ; and (notwithstanding your compliment, Mr. Pearce) the Admiralty will have no trouble in selecting and appointing as good, if not a better captain."

The contending ships were now about two

cables' lengths from each other, with a high rocky coast, lashed with a tremendous surf, about three quarters of a mile to leeward. The promontory extended about two points on the weather-bow of the frigate, and a low sandy tongue of land spread itself far out on her weather-quarter, so that both vessels were completely embayed. The line-of-battle-ship again made an attempt to get up some after-sail; but the well directed fire of the frigate, whenever she rose on the tops of the mountainous waves, which at intervals hid the hulls of both vessels from each other, drove the Frenchmen from their task of safety, and it was now evident that all command of her was lost. She rolled gunnel under, and her remaining mast went by the board.

"Nothing can save her now, Sir," replied the master.

"No," replied the captain. "We have done our work, and must now try to save ourselves."

"Secure the guns—be smart, my lads, you

work for your lives. We must put the mainsail on her, Mr. Pearce, and claw off if we can."

The master shook his head. "Hands by the clue-garnets and buntlines—man the main-sheet—let-go those leech-lines, youngster—haul aboard."

"It's a pity too, by G—d," said the captain, looking over the hammock-rails at the French vessel, which was now running before the wind right on to the shore, dragging the wreck of her masts on each side of her—"Eight or nine hundred poor devils will be called to their last account in the course of a few minutes. I wish we could save them."

"You should have thought of that before, Sir," said the master, with a grave smile at this re-action of feeling on the part of the captain. "Nothing can save them, and I am afraid that nothing but a slant of wind or a miracle can help ourselves."

"She has struck, Sir, and is over on her broadside," said the quarter-master, who was standing on the carronade slide.

“Mind your conn, Sir ; keep your eyes on the weather leech of the sail, and not upon that ship,” answered the captain, with asperity.

In the meantime the mainsail had been set by the first-lieutenant, and the crew, unoccupied, had their eyes directed for a little while upon the French vessel, which lay on her beam-ends, enveloped in spray ; but they also perceived what, during the occupation and anxiety of action, they had not had leisure to attend to, namely, the desperate situation of their own ship. The promontory was now broad on the weather bow, and a reef of rocks, partly above water, extended from it to leeward of the frigate. Such was the anxiety of the ship's company for their own safety, that the eyes of the men were turned away from the stranded vessel, and fixed upon the rocks ; and the dreadful fate of the enemy was quite unheeded, being absorbed in that impending over themselves. The frigate did all that a gallant vessel could do, rising from the trough of the sea, and shaking the water from

her, as she was occasionally buried fore-castle under, from the great pressure of the sail, cleaving the huge masses of the element with her sharp stem, and trembling fore and aft with the violence of her own exertions. But the mountainous waves took her with irresistible force upon her ches-tree, retarding her velocity, and forcing her each moment nearer to the reef.

“Ware ship, Mr. Bully,” said the captain, who had not spoken one word since he rebuked the quarter-master—“we have but just room.”

The master directed the men at the wheel to put helm up, in a firm but subdued tone, for he was at that moment thinking of his wife and children.

The ship had just paid off and gathered fresh way, when she struck upon a sunken rock. A loud and piercing cry from the ship’s company, who ran aft, was followed by an enormous sea striking the frigate on the counter, at once heeling her over and forcing her a-head, so that she slipped off from the rock again into deep water.

"She's off again, Sir!" said the master.

"It's God's mercy, Mr. Pearce! Bring her to the wind as soon as you can," replied the captain, with composure. But the carpenter now ran up the hatchway, and, with a pallid face and hurried tone, declared that the ship was filling fast, and could not be kept afloat more than a few minutes.

"Going down!—going down!" was spread with dreadful rapidity throughout the ship, and all discipline and subordination appeared to be at an end.

Some of the men flew to the boats hoisted up on the quarters, and were casting loose the ropes which secured them, with hands that were tremulous with anxiety and fear.

"Silence there, fore and aft!" roared the captain, in the full compass of his powerful voice. "Every man to his station.—Come out of those boats directly."

All obeyed, except one man, who still continued to cast loose the gripes.

"Come out, Sir," repeated the captain.

"Not I, by G—d!" repeated the sailor, coolly.

The boarding-pikes, which had been lashed round the spanker-boom, had been detached, either from the shot of the enemy, or some other means, and were lying on the deck, close to the cabin sky-light. The captain seizing one, and poising it brandished over his head, a third time ordered the sailor to leave the boat.

"Every man for himself, and God for us all!" was the cool answer of the refractory seaman.

The pike flew, and entered the man's bowels up to the hilt. The poor wretch staggered, made a snatch at the davit, missed it, and fell backwards over the gunnel of the boat into the sea.

"My lads," said Captain M——, emphatically addressing the men, who beheld the scene with dismay, "as long as one plank, ay, one *toothpick*, of this vessel swims, I command, and will be obeyed. Quarter-master, put the helm up. I have but few words to say to you, my

men. The vessel is sinking, and we must put her on the reef—boats are useless. If she hangs together, do you hang to her as your only chance. And now farewell, my brave fellows, for we are not all likely to meet again. Look out for a soft place for her, Mr. Pearce, if you can.”

“ I see but one spot where there is the least chance of her being thrown up, Sir. Starboard a little—steady !—so”—were the cool directions of the master, as the ship flew with increased velocity to her doom. The captain stood on the carronade slide, from which he had addressed the men. His mien was firm and erect—not a muscle of his countenance was observed to change or move, as the sailors watched it, as the barometer of their fate. Awed by the dreadful punishment of the mutineer, and restrained by their long habits of discipline, they awaited their doom in a state of intense anxiety, but in silence.

All this latter description, however, was but the event of about two minutes—which had barely expired, when the frigate dashed upon the reef!

CHAPTER XIV.

Thou, God of this great vast, rebuke those surges which wash both heaven and hell ; and thou that hast upon the winds command, bind them in brass, having called them from the deep.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE shock threw the men off their feet as they raised an appealing cry to Heaven, which was mocked by the howling of the wind, and the roar of the waters. The masts, which were thrown out from their steps, waved once, twice, and then fell over the sides with a crash, as an enormous sea broke over the vessel, forcing her further on the rocks, and causing every timber and knee in her to start from its place. The

masts, as they fell, and the sea, that at the same moment poured over like an impetuous cataract, swept away thirty or forty of the seamen into the boiling element under the lee. Another and another shock from the resistless and furious waves decided the fate of the resolute captain and master. The frigate parted amidships. The fore part of her, which was firmly wedged on the rocks remained. The quarter-deck and after part turned over to the deep water, and disappeared. An enormous surge curled over it as it went down, and, as if disappointed at not being able to wreak its fury upon that part of the vessel, which, by sinking, had evaded it, it drove in revenge upon the remainder, forcing it several yards higher upon the reef.

Two thirds of the ship's company were now gone,—the captain, the master, and the major part of the officers and men, being on the quarter-deck when the ship divided. The cry of the drowning was not heard amidst the roaring of the elements. The behaviour of the captain

and the officers at this dreadful crisis, has not been handed down ; but if we may judge from what has already been narrated, they met their fate like British seamen.

The fore part of the ship still held together, and, fortunately for the survivors, heeled towards the land, so as to afford some protection from the force of the seas, which dashed over it at each succeeding swell of the billows. Daylight left them, and darkness added to the despair and horror of nearly one hundred wretches, who felt, at each shock which threatened to separate the planks and timbers, as if death was loudly knocking to claim the residue of his destined victims. Not one word was exchanged ; but, secured with ropes to the belaying-pins, and other parts of the forecastle where they could pass their lashings, they clung and huddled together, either absorbed in meditation or wailing with despair. Occasionally, one who had supported himself in a difficult and painful position, stimulated with the faint hopes of

life, to which we all so fondly and so foolishly cling, would find that his strength was exhausted, and that he could hold no longer. After vainly imploring those near him to allow him to better his condition by a slight personal sacrifice on their part (an appeal that received no answer), he would gradually loose his hold, and drop into the surge, that was commissioned by death to receive his prey.

There are situations in human life of such powerful excitement, and in which the mechanism of the human frame becomes so rapid in its motion, that the friction of a few days will wear it out. The harrowed feelings of these poor creatures on the wreck, during the short time that they remained, had a greater effect in undermining the constitution than many years of laborious occupation on shore.

Fellow countrymen, if you are at all interested with the scenes I am now describing, and which, if you have any feeling, you must be (however imperfect the description), let the author,

a sailor himself, take this favourable opportunity of appealing to you in behalf of a service at once your protection and your pride. For its sake, as well as your own, listen not to those who, expatiating upon its expense, and silent upon its deserts, would put a stop to hardly earned promotion, and blast with disappointment the energies of the incipient hero. And may those to whom the people at large have delegated their trust, and in whom they have reposed their confidence, treat with contempt the calculations, and miscalculations, of one without head and without heart. *Joseph Hume Esq*

Daylight again, as if unwillingly, appeared, and the wild scud flew past the dark clouds, that seemed to sink down with their heavy burdens till they nearly touched the sea. The waves still followed each other mountains high: the wind blew with the same violence; and as the stormy petrels flew over the billows, indicating by their presence that the gale would

continue, the unfortunate survivors looked at each other in silence and despair.

I know not whether all seamen feel as I do ; but I have witnessed so many miraculous escapes, so many sudden reverses, so much, beyond all hope and conception, achieved by, a reliance upon Providence and your own exertions, that, under the most critical circumstances, I never should despair. If struggling in the centre of the Atlantic, with no vessel in sight, no strength remaining, and sinking under the wave that boiled in my ear, as memory and life were departing,—still, as long as life *did* remain, as long as recollection held her seat, I never should abandon Hope,—never believe that it is all over with me,—till I awoke in the next world, and found it confirmed.

What would these men have valued their lives at in the morning ? Yet at noon a change took place : the weather evidently moderated fast ; and silence, that had reigned for so many

hours, lost his empire, and the chances of being saved began to be calculated. A reef of rocks, many of them above water, over which the breakers still raged, lay between the wreck and the shore, and the certainty of being dashed to pieces, precluded all attempts at reaching it, till the weather became more moderate and the sea less agitated. But when might that be?—and how long were they to resist the united attacks of hunger and fatigue?

The number of men still surviving was about seventy. Many, exhausted and wounded, were hanging in a state of insensibility by the ropes with which they had secured themselves. That our hero was among those who remained need hardly be observed, or there would have been a close to this eventful history. He was secured to the weather side of the foremast-bitts, supported on the one side by the boatswain, and on the other by Price, the second-lieutenant,—next to whom was the captain of the fore-castle, one of the steadiest and best seamen in the ship,

who had been pressed out of a West Indiaman, in which he had served in the capacity of second mate.

Our hero had often turned round with an intention to speak to Price ; but observing that he sat crouched with his face upon his hands and knees, he waited until his messmate should raise his head up, imagining that he was occupied in secret prayer. Finding that he still continued in the same position, Seymour called to him several times. Not receiving any answer, he extended his arm and shook Price by the collar, fearing that he had swooned from cold and fatigue.

Price slowly raised his head, and looking at Seymour, answered not. His vacant stare and wild eye proclaimed at once that reason had departed. Still, as it afterwards appeared, his ruling passion remained ; and, from that incomprehensible quality of our structure, which proves that the mind of man is more fearfully and wonderfully made than the body, the

desertion of one sense was followed by the return of another. His *memory* was perfect, now that his *reason* was gone. Surveying the scene around him, he began with all the theatrical action which the ropes that secured him would permit, to quote his favourite author:—

“Blow winds, and crack your cheeks—rage—blow,
You cataracts, and hurricanoes, spout—”

“‘Poor Tom’s a-cold—’” then, shuddering, he covered up his face, and resumed his former position.

“Is this a time for spouting profane plays, Mr. Price?” said the fanatical boatswain, who was not aware of the poor man’s insanity. “Hold your peace, and call not judgment on our heads, and I prophesy that we shall be saved. ‘The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly; but yet the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier.’”

Silence ensued, which, after a few minutes, was interrupted by Seymour lamenting over the

fate of Captain M——, and the rest of the crew, who had perished.

“ Well, they are in Heaven before this, I hope?” observed Robinson, the captain of the fore-castle.

“ “Many are called, but few chosen,” rejoined the boatswain, who appeared, by the flashing of his eye, to be in a state of strong excitement. “ No more in Heaven than you would be, if the Almighty was pleased to cut you off in his wrath.”

“ Where then, Mr. Hardsett?” inquired Robinson. “ Surely not in—”

“ I know—I know”— cried Price, who again lifted up his head, and, with a vacant laugh, commenced singing—

“ Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea change,
Into something rich and strange;
Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Hark! now I hear them—ding-dong-bell.”

“ For shame, Mr. Price!” interrupted the boatswain.

“ Ding-dong—ding-dong-bell.”

“ Mr. Price, what does the Scripture say ? ‘ Judgments are prepared for scorers,’ ” continued the boatswain, with vehemence.

Price had resumed his former attitude, and made no answer. As soon as the interruption of the lieutenant had ceased, Robinson resumed his interrogatory to the boatswain : “ Where then?—not in hell, I hope.”

“ Ay,” returned the latter, “ in the fire that is never quenched, and for ever and ever.”

“ I hope not,” replied Robinson ; “ I may deserve punishment, and I know I do. I’ve been overhauling my log-book, while the sea here has been dashing over my bows, and washing my figure-head ; and there are some things I wish I could forget ;—they will rise up in judgment against me ; but surely not for ever ?”

“ You should have thought of that before, my good fellow. I am sorry for you,—sorry for all of those who have perished, for they were good seamen, and, in the worldly service, have

done well. I was reflecting the other day whether, out of the whole navy, I should be able to muster one single ship's company in Heaven."

"Well, Mr. Hardsett, it's my firm opinion, that when the hands are turned up for punishment in the next world, we shall be sarved out according to our desarts. Now, that's my belief; and I shan't change it for yours, Mr. Hardsett, for I thinks mine the more comfortable of the two."

"It won't do, Robinson, you must have faith."

"So I have, in God's mercy, boatswain."

"That won't do. Yours is not the true faith."

"Mayhap not, but I hope to ride it out with it nevertheless, for I have it well backed with hope, and if I still drive"—said Robinson, musing a short time—"why I have charity as a sheet anchor to bring me up again. It's long odds but our bodies will soon be knocked to shivers in those breakers, and we shall then know

who's right, and who's wrong. I see small chance of our saving ourselves, unless indeed we could walk on the sea, and there was but one that ever did that."

"Had the apostle had faith, he would not have sunk," rejoined the boatswain.

"Have you then more faith than the apostle?"

"I have, thanks be to Jehovah, the true faith," cried the boatswain, raising his eyes and hands to Heaven.

"Then *walk on shore*," said the captain of the fore-castle, looking him stedfastly in the face.

Stimulated by the request, which appeared to put his courage as a man, and his faith as a christian, to the test, and, at the moment, fanatic even to insanity, the boatswain rose, and casting off the ropes which he had wound round his body, was about to comply with Robinson's request.

A few moments more, and the raging sea

would have received him, had not our hero, in conjunction with the captain of the forecastle, held him down with all his power. "We doubt not your faith, Mr. Hardsett," said Seymour, "but the time of miracles is past. It would be self-murder. He who raised the storm, will, in his own good time, save us, if he thinks fit."

Price, who had listened to the conversation, and had watched the motions of the boatswain, who was casting off the lashings which had secured him, had, unperceived, done the same, and now jumped upon his legs, and collared the astonished boatswain, roaring out—

"'Zounds, shew me what thou'lt do !

Woul't weep ? woul't fight ? woul't fast ? woul't tear thyself ?"

"Why, he's mad !" exclaimed the terrified boatswain, who was not far off the point himself.

"Mad !" resumed Price.

"Not a soul

But felt a fever of the mad, and play'd

Some tricks of desperation.

The king's son, Ferdinand,
With hair upstaring (then like reeds, not hair)
Was the first man that leaped ; cried, Hell is empty,
And all the devils are here ! ”

As the maniac finished the last words, before they could be aware of his intention, he made a spring from the deck over the bulwark, and disappeared under the wave. The boatswain, who had been diverted from his fanatical attempt by the unexpected attack of Price, more than by the remonstrances of his companions, resumed his position, folding his arms, and casting his eyes to Heaven. The captain of the fore-castle was silent, and so was our hero—the thoughts of the two were upon the same subject—eternity.

Eternity !—the only theme that confuses, humbles, and alarms the proud intellect of man. What is it ? The human mind can grasp any defined space, any defined time, however vast ; but this is beyond time, and too great for the limited conception of man. It had no beginning, and can have no end. It cannot be multiplied,

it cannot be divided, it cannot be added unto—you may attempt to subtract from it, but it is useless. Take millions and millions of years from it, take all the time that can enter into the compass of your imagination, it is still whole and undiminished as before—all calculation is lost. Think on—the brain becomes heated, and oppressed with a sensation of weight too powerful for it to bear; reason totters in her seat, and you rise with the conviction of the impossibility of the creature attempting to fathom the Creator—humiliated with the sense of your own nothingness, and impressed with the tremendous majesty of the Deity.

Time is Man—Eternity is God!

CHAPTER XV.

'Thou art perfect then, that our ship hath touched upon the desarts of Bohemia.

Ay, my Lord, and fear we have landed in ill time.

WINTER'S TALE.

ABOUT midnight the moon burst through the clouds, which gradually rolled away to the western horizon, as if they had been furled by some invisible spirits in the air. The wind, after several feeble gusts, like the last breathings of some expiring creature unwilling to loosen the "silver cord," subsided to a calm. It then shifted round to the eastward. The waves relaxed in their force

until they did little more than play upon the side of the wreck, so lately the object of their fury. The dark shadows of the rocks were no longer relieved by the white foam of the surf, which had raged among them with such violence.

Before morning, all was calm, and the survivors, as they shrunk and shivered in their wet garments, encouraged each other with the prospect of a speedy termination to their sufferings on the re-appearance of daylight. The sun rose in splendour, and seemed, as he darted his searching rays through the cloudless expanse, to exclaim in his pride, "Behold how I bring light and heat, joy and salvation, to yon, late despairing creatures!" The rocks of the reef above water, which had previously been a source of horror, and had been contemplated as the sure engines of their destruction, were now joyfully reckoned as so many resting spots for those who were about to attempt to reach the land.

The most daring and expert swimmers launched themselves into the water, and made for the nearest cluster of rocks, with difficulty gaining a footing on them, after clinging by the dark and slippery seaweed which covered their tops, like shaggy hair on the heads of so many emerging giants.

The waving of the hands of the party who had succeeded in gaining the rocks, encouraged a second to follow ; while others, who could not swim, were busily employed in searching for the means of supporting themselves in the water, and floating themselves on shore.

Self, that had predominated, now lost its ground. Those who had allowed their shipmates to perish in attempting to gain the same place of security as themselves, without an effort in their favour, or one sigh for their unlucky fate, now that hope was revived almost to a certainty of deliverance, shewed as much interest in the preservation of others, lying in a state of exhaustion, as they did for their own.

The remaining officers recovered their authority, which had been disregarded, and the shattered fragment of the *Aspasia* re-assumed its rights of discipline and obedience to the last.

In a few hours, sick, disabled and wounded were all safely landed, and the raft which had been constructed returned to the wreck, to bring on shore whatever might be useful.

Our hero, who was the only officer who had been saved, with the exception of the boatswain, to whom he was senior in rank, had taken upon himself the command, and occupied himself with the arrangements necessary for the shelter and sustenance of his men. A range of barren hills, abruptly rising from the iron-bound coast, covered with large fragments and detached pieces of rock, without any symptom of cultivation, or any domesticated animal in sight, which might imply that human aid was not far distant, met the eye of Seymour, as he directed it to every point, in hopes of succour for his wounded and exhausted com-

panions. One of the men, whom he had sent to reconnoitre, returned in a few minutes, stating, that behind a jutting rock, which he pointed to with his finger, not two hundred yards distant, he had discovered a hut, or what in Ireland is termed a shealing, and that there appeared to be a bridle road from it leading over the mountain. To this shelter our hero determined to remove his disabled men, and, in company with the boatswain and the man who had returned with the intelligence, set off to examine the spot. Passing the rock, he perceived that the hut, which bore every sign, from its smokeless chimney and air of negligence and decay, to have been some time deserted, stood upon a piece of ground, about an acre in extent, which had once been cultivated, but now was luxuriant with a spontaneous crop of weeds and thistles. He approached the entrance, and as the rude door creaked upon its hinges when he threw it open, was saluted by a faint voice, which cried, "*Qui va-là ?*"

"Why, there's Irishmen inside," observed the sailor.

"Frenchmen rather, I should imagine," replied our hero, as he entered and discovered seven or eight of the unfortunate survivors of the French line-of battle-ship, who had crawled there, bruised, cut, and apparently in the last state of exhaustion.

"*Bon jour, camarade,*" said one of them, with difficulty raising himself on his elbow—" *As-tu d'eau de vie ?*"

"I am afraid not," replied Seymour, looking with compassion on the group, all of which had their eyes directed towards him, although, from their wounds and bruises, they were not able to turn their bodies. "We are shipwrecked, as well as you."

"What! did you belong to that cursed frigate?"

"We did," replied Seymour, "and there are but few of us alive to tell the tale."

"*Vive la France !*" cried the Frenchman, "*Puis qu'elle n'a pas échappée,—je n'ai plus des regrets.*"

"*Viva, viva !*" repeated the rest of the French party, in faint accents.

"*Et moi, je meurs content !*" murmured one, who, in a few seconds afterwards, expired.

"Are you the only survivors?" demanded Seymour.

"All that are left," replied the spokesman of the party, "out of eight hundred and fifty men—*Sacristie—as-tu d'eau de vie ?*"

"I hardly know what we have—something has been saved from the wreck," replied Seymour, "and shall cheerfully be shared with you, with all the assistance we can afford. We were enemies, but we are now brothers in affliction. I must quit you to bring up our wounded men; there is sufficient room, I perceive, for all of us. *Adieu, pour le moment !*"

"*Savez-vous que c'est un brave garçon, ce lieutenant-là ?*" observed the Frenchman to his companions, as Seymour and his party quitted the hut.

Seymour returned to the beach, and, collecting his men, found the survivors to consist of

forty-four seamen and marines, the boatswain, and himself. Of these, fifteen were helpless, from wounds and fractured limbs. The articles which had been collected were a variety of spars and fragments of wood, some of the small sails which had been triced up in the rigging, one or two casks of beef and pork, and a puncheon of rum, which had miraculously steered its course between the breakers, and had been landed without injury. The sails, which had been spread out to dry, were first carried up to form a bed for the sick and wounded, who, in the space of an hour, were all made as comfortable as circumstances would admit, a general bed having been made on the floor of the hut, upon which they and the wounded Frenchmen shared the sails between them. The spars and fragments were then brought up, and a fire made in the long deserted hearth, while another was lighted outside for the men to dry their clothes. The cask of rum was rolled up to the door, and a portion, mixed with the water from a rill that trickled down the sides of

the adjacent mountain, served out to the exhausted parties. The seamen, stripping off their clothes, and spreading them out to dry before the fire, which had been made outside, collected into the hut to shield their naked bodies from the inclemency of the weather.

The spirits, which had been supplied with caution to the survivors of the French vessel, had been eagerly seized by the one who had first addressed our hero, and in half-an-hour he seemed to be quite revived. He rose, and, after trying his limbs by moving slowly to and fro, gradually recovered the entire use of them—and by the time that the circulation of his blood had been thoroughly restored by a second dose of spirits, appeared to have little to complain of. He was a powerful, well-looking man, with a large head, covered with a profusion of shaggy hair. Seymour looked at him earnestly, and thought he could not well be mistaken, long as it was since they had been in company.

“Excuse me—but I think we once met at Cherbourg. Is not your name Debriseau?”

“*Sacristie!*” replied the Frenchman, seizing himself by the hair, “*je suis connu!* And who are you?”

“Oh! now I’m sure it’s you,” replied Seymour, laughing—“that’s your old trick—do you not recollect the boy that Captain McElvina took off the wreck?”

“*Ah, mon ami*—Seymour, I believe—midshipman, I believe,” cried Debriseau. *Est-ce donc vous? Mais, mon Dieu, que c’est drôle,*” (again pulling his hair, as he grinded his teeth), “*un diable de rencontre!*”

“And how is it that you have been on board of a French man-of-war?”

“How! oh, I was unlucky after McElvina went away, and I thought, on reflection, notwithstanding his arguments, that it was a dishonest sort of concern. Being pretty well acquainted with the coasts, I shipped on board as pilot.”

"But, Debriseau, are you not a native of Guernsey, which is part of the British dominions?"

"Bah! it's all one, *mon ami*; we islanders are like the bat in the fable—beast or bird, as it suits us—we belong to either country. For my part, I have a strong national affection for *both*."

Their conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the boatswain, who had remained outside, in charge of the cask of rum, upon which he had seated himself, occupied with his Bible. "Here's assistance coming, Mr. Seymour. There's at least twenty or thirty men descending the hill."

"Hurrah for old Ireland! they are the boys that will look after a friend in distress," shouted Conolly, one of the seamen, who thus eulogised his own countrymen, as he hung naked over the fire.

CHAPTER XVI.

With dauntless hardihood,
And brandish'd blade rush on him,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
* * * though he and his curs'd crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high.

MILTON.

THE information received from Mr. Hardsett induced our hero to break off his conversation with Debriseau, and he immediately quitted the hut. A party of men, wild in their appearance and demeanour, were bounding down through the rocks, flourishing their bludgeons over their heads, with loud shouts. They soon arrived within a few yards of the shealing, and, to the

astonishment of Seymour and the boatswain, who, with a dozen more, had resumed their clothes, seemed to eye them with hostile rather than with friendly glances. Their intentions were, however, soon manifested by their pouncing upon the habiliments of the seamen, which were spread out to dry, holding them rolled up under one arm, while they flourished their shillelahs in defiance with the other.

“Avast there, my lads,” cried the boatswain; “why are you meddling with those clothes?”

A shout, with confused answers in Irish, was the incomprehensible reply.

“Conolly,” cried Seymour, “you can speak to them. Ask them what they mean?”

Conolly addressed them in Irish, when an exchange of a few sentences took place.

“Bloody end to the rapparees!” said Conolly, turning to our hero. “It’s helping themselves they’re a’ter, instead of helping us. They say that all that comes on shore from a wreck is their own by right, and that they’ll have it. They

asked me what was in the cask, and I told them it was the cratur, sure enough, and they say that they must have it, and every thing else, and that if we don't give it up peaceably, they'll take the lives of us."

Seymour, who was aware that the surrender of the means of intoxication would probably lead to worse results, turned to his men, who had assembled outside of the hut, and had armed themselves with spars and fragments of the wreck on the first appearance of hostility, and directed them to roll the cask of rum into the hut, and prepare to act on the defensive. The English seamen, indignant at such violation of the laws of hospitality, and at the loss of their clothes, immediately complied with his instructions, and, with their blood boiling, were with difficulty restrained from commencing the attack.

A shaggy-headed monster, apparently the leader of the hostile party, again addressed Connolly, in his own language.

“It’s to know whether ye’ll give up the cask quietly, or have a fight for it. The devil a pair of trousers will they give back, not even my own, though I’m an Irishman, and a Galway man to boot. By J——s, Mr. Seymour, it’s to be hoped ye’ll not give up the cratur without a bit of a row.”

“No,” replied Seymour. “Tell them that they shall not have it, and that they shall be punished for the theft they have already committed.”

“You’re to come and take it,” roared Connolly, in Irish, to the opposing party.

“Now, my lads,” cried Seymour, “you must fight hard for it — they will shew little wuercy, if they gain the day.”

The boatswain returned his Bible to his breast, and, seizing the mast of the frigate’s jolly-boat, which had been thrown up with the other spars, poised it with both hands on a level with his head, so as to use the foot of it as a battering-ram, and stalked before his men.

The Irish closed with loud yells, and the affray commenced with a desperation seldom to be witnessed. Many were the wounds given and received, and several of either party were levelled in the dust. The numbers were about even; but the weapons of the Irish were of a better description, each man being provided with his own shillelah of hard wood, which he had been accustomed to wield.

But the boatswain did great execution, as he launched forward his mast, and prostrated an Irishman every time, with his cool and well-directed aim. After a few minutes' contention, the Englishmen were beaten back to the shealing, where they rallied, and continued to stand at bay. Seymour, anxious at all events that the Irish should not obtain the liquor, directed Robinson, the captain of the fore-castle, to go into the hut, take the bung out of the cask, and start the contents. This order was obeyed, while the contest was continued outside, till McDermot, the leader of the Irish, called off

his men, that they might recover their breath for a renewal of the attack.

“If it’s the liquor you want,” cried Conolly to them, by the direction of Seymour, “you must be quick about it. There it’s all running away through the doors of the shealing.”

This announcement had, however, the contrary effect to that which Seymour intended it should produce. Enraged at the loss of the spirits, and hoping to gain possession of the cask before it was all out, the Irish returned with renewed violence to the assault, and drove the English to the other side of the shealing, obtaining possession of the door, which they burst into, to secure their prey. About eight or ten had entered, and had seized upon the cask, which was not more than half emptied, when the liquor, which had run out under the door of the hut, communicated in its course with the fire that had been kindled outside. With the rapidity of lightning, the flame ran up the stream that continued to flow, igniting the whole

of the spirits in the cask, which blew up with a tremendous explosion, darting the fiery liquid over the whole interior, and communicating the flame to the thatch, and every part of the building, which was instantaneously in ardent combustion. The shrieks of the poor disabled wretches, stretched on the sails to which the fire had communicated, and who were now lying in a molten sea of flame, like that described in Pandemonium by Milton—the yells of the Irish, inside of the hut, vainly attempting to regain the door, as they writhed in their flaming apparel, which, like the shirt of Nessus, ate into their flesh—the burning thatch, which had been precipitated in the air, and now descended in fiery flakes upon the parties outside, who stood aghast at the dreadful and unexpected catastrophe, — the volumes of black and suffocating smoke, which poured out from every quarter, formed a scene of horror to which no pen can do adequate justice. But all was soon over. The shrieks and yells had yielded to suffocation,

and the flames, in their fury, had devoured every thing with such rapidity, that they subsided for the want of further aliment. In a few minutes, nothing remained but the smoking walls and the blackened corpses which they encircled.

Ill-fated wretches ! ye had escaped the lightning's blast—ye had been rescued from the swallowing wave—and little thought that you would encounter an enemy more cruel still—your fellow creature—man.

The first emotions of Seymour and his party, as soon as they had recovered from the horror which had been excited by the catastrophe, were those of pity and commiseration ; but their reign was short—

“ Revenge impatient rose,
And threw his blood-stained sword in thunder down.”

The smoking ruins formed the altar at which he received their vows, and stimulated them to the sacrifice of further victims.

Nor did he fail to inspire the breasts of the

other party, indignant at the loss of their companions, and disappointed at the destruction of what they so ardently coveted.

Debriseau, who had played no idle game in the previous skirmish, was the first who rushed to the attack. Crying out, with all the theatrical air of a Frenchman, which never deserts him, even in the agony of grief, "*Mes braves compagnons, vous serez vengés !*" he flew at M^c Dermot, the leader of the Irish savages.

A brand of half-consumed wood, with which he aimed at M^cDermot's head, broke across the bludgeon which was raised to ward the blow. Debriseau closed; and, clasping his arms round his neck, tore him with his strong teeth with the power and ferocity of a tiger, and they rolled together in the dust, covered with the blood which poured in streams, and struggling for mastery and life. An American, one of the Aspasia's crew, now closed in the same way, with another of the Irish desperadoes, and as they fell together, twirling the side-locks on

the temples of his antagonist round his fingers, to obtain a fulcrum to his lever, and inserting his thumbs into the sockets of his eyes, forced out the balls of vision, and left him in agony and in darkness.

“The sword of the Lord!” roared the boatswain, as he fractured the scull of a third with the mast of the boat, which, with herculean force, he now whirled round his head.

“Fight, Aspasia, you fight for your lives,” cried Seymour, who was everywhere in advance, darting the still burning end of the large spar into the faces of his antagonists, who recoiled with suffocation and pain. It was, indeed, a struggle for life; the rage of each had mounted to delirium. The English sailors, stimulated by the passions of the moment, felt neither pain nor fatigue from their previous sufferings. The want of weapons had been supplied by their clasp knives, to which the Irish had also resorted, and deadly wounds were given and received.

McDermot, the Irish leader, had just gained the mastery of Debriseau, bestriding his body and strangling him, with his fingers so fixed in his throat that they seemed deeply to have entered into the flesh. The Guernsey man was black in the face, and his eyes starting from their sockets ; in a few minutes he would have been no more, when the mast in the hands of the boatswain descended upon the Irishman's head, and dashed out his brains. At the same moment, one of the Irishmen darted his knife into the side of Seymour, who fell, streaming with his own blood. The fate of their officer, which excited the attention of the seamen, and the fall of McDermot on the opposite side, to whose assistance the Irish immediately hastened, added to the suspension of their powers from want of breath, produced a temporary cessation of hostilities. Dragging away their killed and wounded, the panting antagonists retreated to the distance of a few yards from each other, tired, but not satisfied with their revenge, and

fully intending to resume the strife as soon as they had recovered the power.

But a very few seconds had elapsed, when they were interrupted by a third party; and the clattering of horses' hoofs was immediately followed by the appearance of a female on horseback, who, galloping past the Irishmen, reined up her steed, throwing him on his haunches, in his full career, in the space between the late contending parties.

"'Tis the daughter of the House!" exclaimed the Irishmen, in consternation.

There wanted no such contrast as the scene described to add lustre to her beauty, or to enhance her charms. Fair as the snow-drift, her cheeks mantling with the roseate blush of exercise and animation,—her glossy hair, partly uncurled, and still played with by the amorous breeze, hanging in long ringlets down her neck,—her eye, which alternately beamed with pity or flashed with indignation, as it was directed to one side or the other,—her symmetry

of form, which the close riding-dress displayed—her graceful movements, as she occasionally restrained her grey palfrey, who fretted to resume his speed, all combined with her sudden and unexpected appearance to induce the boatswain and his men to consider her as superhuman.

“She’s an angel of light!” muttered the boatswain to himself.

She turned to the Irish, and, in an energetic tone, addressed them in their own dialect. What she had said was unknown to the English party, but the effect which her language produced was immediate. Their weapons were thrown aside, and they hung down their heads in confusion. They made an attempt to walk away, but a few words from her induced them to remain.

The fair equestrian was now joined by two more, whose pace had not been so rapid; and the boatswain, who had been contemplating her with astonishment, as she was addressing the

Irish, now that she was about to turn towards him, recollected that some of his men were not exactly in a costume to meet a lady's eye. He raised his call to his mouth, and, with a sonorous whistle, cried out, "All you without trousers behind shealing, hoy!" an order immediately obeyed by the men who had been deprived of their habiliments.

Conolly, who had understood the conversation which had taken place, called out, in Irish, at the same time as he walked round behind the walls, "I think ye'll be after giving us our duds now, ye dirty spalpeens, so bring 'em wid you quick;" a request which was immediately complied with, the clothes being collected by two of the Irish, and taken to the men who had retired behind the walls of the shealing.

Mr. Hardsett was not long in replying to her interrogations, and in giving her an outline of the tragical events which had occurred, while

the ladies, trembling with pity and emotion, listened to the painful narrative.

“Are you the only officer then of the frigate that is left?”

“No, madam,” replied the boatswain, “the third-lieutenant is here, but there he lies, poor fellow, desperately wounded by these men, from whom we expected to have had relief.”

“What was the name of your frigate?”

“The *Aspasia*, Captain M——.”

“Oh heaven!” cried the girl, catching at the collar of the boatswain’s coat in her trepidation — “And the wounded officer’s name?”

“Seymour.”

A cry of anguish and horror escaped from all the party as the beautiful interrogatress tottered in her seat, and then fell off into the arms of the boatswain

In a few seconds, recovering herself, she regained her feet. “Quick, quick—lead me to him.”

Supported by Hardsett, she tottered to the spot where Seymour lay, with his eyes closed, faint and exhausted with loss of blood, attended by Robinson and Debriseau.

She knelt down by his side, and taking his hand, which she pressed between her own, called him by his name.

Seymour startled at the sound of the voice, opened his eyes, and in the beauteous form which was reclining over him, beheld—his dear, dear Emily.

CHAPTER XVII.

Ah me ! what perils do environ
 The man that meddles with cold iron !
 What plaguy mischiefs and mishaps
 Do dog him still with after-claps.

HUDIBRAS.

THE melancholy loss of lives which we have detailed, occurred upon a reef of rocks, close to Cape ———, on the coast of Galway, and not four miles from the castle and property held by Mr. Rainscourt. The intelligence had been communicated to M'Elvina by some of his tenants early in the morning of the day on

which the survivors had gained the shore. The western gales sweeping the Atlantic, and blowing with such fury on the coast, would not permit any vegetation or culture so near the beach, but when once past the range of hills which exposed their rugged sides as barriers to the blast, the land was of good quality, and thickly tenanted. The people were barbarous to an excess, and, as they had stated, claimed a traditionary right to whatever property might be thrown up from the numerous wrecks which took place upon the dangerous and iron-bound coast. This will account for the tragical events of the day.

When M^cElvina was informed of vessels having been stranded, he immediately went up to the castle to procure the means of assistance, which were always held there in readiness, and as many of Rainscourt's people as could be collected. This, however, required some little delay; and Emily, shocked at the imperfect intelligence which had been conveyed to her, deter-

mined to ride down immediately, in company with Mrs. McElvina, and a young friend who was staying with her during her father's absence. On their arrival at the sea-range of hills, the explosion of the shealing, and subsequent conflict between the parties, met their eyes. Emily's fears, and knowledge of the Irish peasantry, immediately suggested the cause, and, aware of her influence with the Rainscourt tenants, she made all the haste that the roads would permit, to arrive at the spot, galloping down the hill, in so bold and dexterous a style that her companions neither could nor would have dared to keep pace with her.

How fortunate was her arrival need hardly be observed, as in all probability the English seamen would eventually have been sacrificed to the cupidity and resentment of the natives.

"William, do you know me?" whispered Emily, as the tears rolled down her cheeks, and her countenance betrayed the anguish of her mind.

Seymour pressed the small white hand that trembled in his own, and a faint smile illuminated his features ; but the excitement at the appearance of Emily was too great—the blood again gushed from his wound, his eyes closed, and his head fell on his shoulder, as he swooned from the loss of blood.

“ Oh, God, preserve him !” cried Emily, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes to Heaven, and then sinking down in mental and fervent prayer.

“ My dear McElvina, I am so glad that you have come at last,” said Susan, bursting into tears. “ Look at whose side Emily is kneeling —’tis William Seymour, dying.”

“ Seymour !” cried McElvina, who had but that moment arrived ; but aware of the importance of prompt assistance, he called for the basket containing the restoratives, and gently removing Emily, he took her situation by the side of our wounded hero.

To strip off his clothes, examine the wound,

bandage it, so as to prevent a further loss of blood, and pour down his throat some diluted wine, was the work of a few minutes. Seymour, who had only fainted, re-opened his eyes, and soon shewed the good effects of M^cElvina's presence of mind.

"M^cElvina,—is it not?—Did not I see Emily?"

"Yes, you did, my dear fellow; but keep quiet. I do not think your wound is dangerous."

"I am better now, M^cElvina—much better; but I must see Emily."

M^cElvina thought it advisable to accede to his wish, and returned to his wife, who was supporting the fainting girl. A glass of water, the assurance that Seymour would do well, if not too much agitated, and a promise exacted from her to say but little, was followed by an interview which had a reviving effect upon both.

Medical practitioners, who dive into the inmost recesses of the human frame in pursuit of knowledge, and who search through the

mineral and vegetable kingdom for relief, when will you produce a balm so healing, a specific so powerful, an elixir so instantaneous or restorative, as—joy?

McElvina was in the mean time occupied in preparations for removing the wounded, and portioning out food and necessaries to the rest of the party. When he beheld the sad relics in the shealing, and heard from the boatswain the tragical events of the day, his indignation was beyond bounds. Seven Frenchmen, fifteen Englishmen, and eight Irishmen, had been burnt alive; three Englishmen and five Irishmen had been killed in the affray; making, independently of many severely wounded, a total of thirty-eight who had perished on this disastrous morning.

The Irish who had attacked them were all tenants of the property belonging either to him or Rainscourt—an immediate notice to quit was given to them on the spot, and the dreadful word, emigration, thundered in their ears.

This brought them on their knees, with such crying and beseeching, such uncouth and ridiculous gestures, as almost to create a laugh among the English seamen who were witnesses to the scene.

“Well, if them an’t funny beggars, I’ll be blowed,” cried one of the English seamen.

“Just the way wid ’em,” observed Conolly, “all honey or all vinegar—there’s never a good turn they won’t do ye now. If it had not been the ‘cratur,’ there wouldn’t have been this blow up.”

But to continue. The bodies of the dead in the shealing were consigned to the earth as they lay, the four walls composing a mausoleum where animosity was buried. The corpses of M^cDermot, and the Irish who had been killed in the conflict, were removed by their friends that they might be *waked*. By the direction of M^cElvina, the wounded English were carried up by their former antagonists to the small town at the foot of the castle, where surgical

assistance was to be obtained. Seymour was placed on a sort of bier that had been constructed for him—Emily and her companions riding by his side; and the cavalcade wound up the hill, the rear brought up by Mr. Hardsett and the remainder of the English crew.

In two hours all were at their respective destinations; and Seymour, who had been examined by the surgeon upon his arrival at the castle, and whose wound had been pronounced by no means dangerous, was in bed and fast asleep, Susan and Emily watching by his side.

Debriseau, who had recognised his quondam friend, McElvina, and perceived by his appearance, and the respect that was shewn to him, that he had been more fortunate in his career, since they had parted, than he had himself, from a proud feeling of the moment, did not make himself known. That McElvina, who had no idea of meeting him in such a quarter, should not, in the hurry of the scene, distinguish his former associate, covered as he was with

dust and blood, and having the appearance more of a New Zealand warrior, than of any other living being, was not surprising—and Debriseau joined the English party in the rear of the cavalcade, and remained with them at the town, while M^cElvina and the rest of the cortége continued their route to the castle, with the wounded Seymour.

As soon as our hero's wound had been dressed, and the favourable opinion of the surgeon had been pronounced, M^cElvina rode down to the town, to make arrangements for the board and lodging of the English seamen. It was then that he was asked by Mr. Hardsett, what was to be done with the Frenchman who had been saved.

“Where is he?” demanded M^cElvina.

Debriseau was summoned to the magistrate, and having cleaned himself of the dust and gore, was immediately recognised.

“Debriseau!” exclaimed M^cElvina, with astonishment, and a look of displeasure.

“Even so, Captain M^cElvina,” replied Debriseau, haughtily; “you do not seem very well pleased at meeting an old acquaintance.”

“Captain Debriseau, will you do me the favour to step on one side with me. I will ‘be honest,’ with you,” continued M^cElvina to the Guernseyman, when they were out of hearing of the boatswain and the rest; “and confess that, although I wish you well, I was not pleased at meeting with you here. You addressed me as Captain M^cElvina—that title has long been dropped. I did once confide to you the secret of my former life, and will own, what I little imagined at the time, that I have in consequence put it into your power to do me serious injury. You must now listen to me, while I give you a sketch of my memoirs, from the time that we parted at Cherbourg.”

M^cElvina then entered into a short history of what the reader is acquainted with.—“Judge, then, Debriseau,” pursued he, “if, after what has passed, I could ‘*honestly*’ say that I was glad

to see *you*—who not only, by your presence, reminded me of my former irregularities, but had the means, if you thought proper, of acquainting my friends and acquaintances with what I wish I could forget myself.”

“Captain—I beg your pardon, Mr. M^cElvina,” replied Debriseau with dignity, “I will be as honest as you. I am here without a sous, and without a shirt, and when I leave this, I know not where to lay my hand upon either; but rather than betray a confidence reposed in me, rather than injure one who always was my friend, or, what is still more unworthy, attempt to work upon your fears to my own advantage, I would suffer death, nay, more—*Sacristie*—I would sooner turn custom-house officer. No, no, M^cElvina—*Je suis François, moi*—bah, I mean I am a true Englishman. Never mind what I am—all countries are alike, if a man’s heart is in the right place. I sincerely wish you joy of your good fortune, and know nobody that in my opinion deserves it more. I

shall go to prison with some resignation, now that I know you have been so fortunate; and do me not the injustice to imagine, that you will ever be troubled by either seeing or hearing from me."

"I waited for this answer, Debriseau: had you made any other, I would have run the risk and defied you; nothing would have induced me to have offered to bribe your silence. But I rejoice in your honest and manly conduct—'Honesty is the best policy,' Debriseau. I can now offer, and you can accept, without blushing on either side, that assistance which I have both the power and will to grant. There is no occasion for your going to prison. I make the returns as magistrate, and, as you are an English subject, will be answerable for the omission. We are too far from the world here to have any questions asked. And now let me know how I can be of any service to you, for my purse and interest you may command."

"Well, then, to tell you the truth, I am fit

for nothing on shore. I must have another vessel, if I can get one."

"Not a smuggling vessel, I hope," replied M^cElvina, gravely.

"I should prefer it, certainly. Why, there's no harm in smuggling, if I recollect your arguments right," replied Debriseau, smiling. "Do you remember the night that you convinced me?"

"I do, very well," said M^cElvina; "but I have reconsidered the subject, and I have one little remark to make, which will upset the whole theory; which is, that other people acting wrong, cannot be urged as an excuse for our own conduct. If it were, the world would soon be left without virtue or honesty. You may think me scrupulous; but I am sincere. Cannot you hit upon something else?"

"Why, I should have no objection to command a fine merchant vessel, if I could obtain such a thing."

"That you shall," replied M^cElvina; "and

to make sure of it, and render you more independent, you shall be part-owner. Consider it as *une affaire arrangée*. And now allow me to offer you the means of improving your personal appearance—I presume the leathern bag is empty.”

“Bah! a long while ago. After I had lost my vessel, I made up to Mademoiselle Picardon; I thought it would not be a bad speculation—but she never forgave me kicking that dirty puppy down stairs—little beast!”

“Ah! you forget some of my remarks,” replied M^cElvina, laughing—“ ‘Love me, love my dog.’ Now oblige me by accepting this; and, Debriseau (excuse me), there’s a capital barber in this street.—*Au revoir*.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

Under his lordship's leave, all must be mine.

MIDDLETON.

THE first moments of leisure that M^cElvina could obtain from his duties, were employed in writing to the vicar, informing him of the re-appearance of Seymour, under such peculiar circumstances; and requesting his immediate presence, that our hero's claims to the property of Admiral de Courcy might be established. As before observed, Rainscourt was not at the

castle, nor was he expected for some days, having accepted an invitation to join a shooting party, collected at the house of an acquaintance, some miles distant. A letter was despatched to him by his daughter, detailing the circumstances of the shipwreck, stating that the wounded officer was in the castle, and that, in consequence, until his return Mrs. M^cElvina would remain as her companion.

Although the wound that Seymour had received, had been pronounced by the surgeon not to be of a dangerous tendency, still, he did not recover so rapidly as might have been expected from his youth and excellent constitution. The fact was, that all his love for Emily, who was constantly at his side, and could not conceal her regard for him, had returned with tenfold violence. The same honourable principle which had before decided him—that of not taking advantage of her prepossession in his favour, and permitting her to throw away herself and her large fortune upon one of

unknown parentage and pennyless condition,—militated against his passion, and caused such a tumult of contending feelings, as could not but affect a person in his weak state. A slow fever came on, which retarded the cure, and even threatened more serious consequences.

Madame de Staël has truly observed, that love occupies the whole life of a woman. It is not therefore surprising that women should be more skilful in detecting the symptoms of it in others. Mrs. M^cElvina, with the usual penetration of her sex, discovered what was passing in the mind of Seymour, and communicated her suspicions to her husband. As for some days the health of our hero rather declined than improved, M^cElvina determined to entrust him with the secret of his birth, which, by removing all difficulties, he imagined would produce a beneficial effect.

But there was one point which M^cElvina could not conceal from our hero, which was, the melancholy fact of his father having, under

an assumed name, fallen a sacrifice to the offended laws of his country; and the knowledge of this had so serious an effect upon Seymour, as almost to neutralize the joy arising from the rest of the communication.

The first question which he asked himself was, whether Emily would or ought to marry a man whose father had perished by so ignominious a death; and, now that all other impediments to his making her an offer of his hand were removed, whether that circumstance alone would not be an insuperable bar to their union. Agitated by these conflicting doubts, Seymour passed a sleepless night, and on the ensuing morning his fever had alarmingly increased. This was observed by the surgeon, who stated that he could not account for it, except by supposing that there was something heavy on the mind of his patient, which, unless removed, would retard, if not prevent, recovery.

Susan, who with her husband had imagined that the disclosure which had taken place would

have had a beneficial effect, hastened to the sick chamber, and soon persuaded our hero to make her a confidant of his doubts and fears. "There is but one who can satisfy you on that point, my dear William," replied she; "for although I feel convinced that I can answer for her, it is not exactly a case of proxy—M^cElvina will be here directly, and then I will obtain his permission to disclose the whole to Emily, and you will have the answer from her own lips."

In the course of the forenoon Emily was made acquainted with the eventful history of our hero's birth and parentage—of her no longer being an heiress—of his ardent love for her, and of the fears that he entertained upon the subject.

"I am only sorry for one thing," replied Emily, in her tears, as Susan finished her communication, "that he did not ask me to marry him when I thought that I was an heiress—now, if I accept him, I am afraid it may be thought—Oh, if you knew how I have loved him—how I

have thought of him when far away," cried the sobbing girl, "you would not—no one would think me capable of interested motives.—I am so glad the property is his," continued Emily, looking and smiling through her tears.

"Why, my dear Emily, if you begin to make difficulties we shall be worse than ever. There never was a more fortunate occurrence than this attachment between you and Seymour. It reconciles all difficulties, puts an end to all Chancery suits, and will shower general happiness, when some at least must have been made miserable. Come with me—William is very feverish this morning; you only can do him good."

Mrs. McElvina led the agitated girl into the sick chamber, and whispering to Seymour that Emily knew all, and that all was well, was so very imprudent as to allow her feelings to overcome her sense of chaperonism, and left them together.

I am aware that I now have a fair opportunity of inserting a most interesting conversation,

full of *ohs* and *ahs*, *dears* and *sweets*, &c., which would be much relished by all misses of seventeen, or thereabouts; but as I do not write novels for them, and the young couple have no secrets to which the reader is not already a party, I shall leave them to imagine the explanation, with all its concomitant retrospections and anticipations, softened with tears and sweetened with kisses; and as the plot now thickens, change the scene to the dressing-room of Rainscourt, who returned late last night, and has now just risen, at his usual hour, viz. between two and three in the afternoon. His French valet is in attendance shaving him, and dressing his hair, and communicating what little intelligence, foreign or domestic, he has been enabled to collect for his master's amusement.

“Monsieur has not seen the young officer who was wounded.”

“No; I wonder why they brought him up here. What sort of a person is he?”

“*C'est un joli garçon, Monsieur, avec l'air*

bien distingué.—I carried in the water this morning when his wound was dressed, for I had the curiosity to see him—*C'est un diable de blessure*—and the young officer has a very singular mark on the right shoulder, like—*comment l'appellez-vous ?—pied de corbeau.*"

Rainscourt started under the operation of the razor, he remembered the mark of the grand-child, so minutely described by the vicar.

"*Pardon, Monsieur, ce n'est pas ma faute,*" said the valet, applying a napkin to staunch the blood which flowed from his master's cheek.

"It was not," replied Rainscourt, recovering himself, "I had a slight spasm."

The operation was continued, and fortunately had just been finished when the valet resumed,—
"*Et rappelez-vous, Monsieur le Vicaire de —.*
Il est arrivé hier au soir, on a visit to Mr. McElvina."

"The devil he is?" replied Rainscourt, springing from his chair, at the corroborating incident to his previous ground of alarm.

The astonished countenance of the valet restored the master to his senses. "Bring me my coffee—I am nervous this morning."

But Rainscourt had not long to endure suspense. He had barely finished his toilet, when he was informed that the vicar, McElvina, and some other gentlemen, were below, and wished to speak to him.

Rainscourt, anxious to know the worst, descended to the library, where he found the parties before mentioned, accompanied by Debriseau and a legal gentleman. We shall not enter into detail. To the dismay of Rainscourt, the identity of our hero was established beyond all doubt, and he felt convinced that eventually he should be forced to surrender up the property. His indignation was chiefly levelled at McElvina, whom he considered as the occasion of the whole, not only from having rescued our hero from the wreck, but because it was by his assertions, corroborated by Debriseau, that the chain of evidence was clearly sub-

stantiated. M^cElvina, who, from long acquaintance, had a feeling towards Rainscourt which his conduct did not deserve, waited only for his acknowledgment of our hero's claim to communicate the circumstance of the attachment between the young people, which would have barred all further proceedings and have settled it in an amicable arrangement.

"Well, gentlemen," observed Rainscourt, with pique, "if you can satisfactorily prove in a court of justice all you have now stated, I shall of course bow to its decision; but you must excuse me if, out of regard to my daughter, I resist, until the assertions can be substantiated on oath. You cannot expect otherwise."

"We do not expect otherwise, Mr. Rainscourt," replied M^cElvina,—“but we think it will not be necessary that it should go into court.”

"Mr. M^cElvina," interrupted Rainscourt, angrily,—“I wish no observations from you. After your intimacy with the family, particu-

larly with my daughter, who, by your means, will probably forfeit all her prospects, I consider your conduct base and treacherous. You'll excuse my ringing the bell for the servant to shew you the door."

M^cElvina turned pale with rage. "Then, Sir, you shall have no suggestions from me. Come, gentlemen, we will retire," continued M^cElvina, now determined that Rainscourt should be left in ignorance for the present; and the parties quitted the room, little contemplating that such direful consequences would ensue from this trifling altercation.

CHAPTER XIX.

Was there ever seen such villainy,
So neatly plotted, and so well performed,
Both held in hand, and flatly both beguiled?

Jew of Malta.

THE feelings of Rainscourt were worked up to desperation and madness. As soon as the party had quitted the room, he paced up and down, clenching his fists and throwing them in the air, as his blood boiled against M^cElvina, whom he considered as his mortal enemy. To send him a challenge, with the double view of removing him and his testimony, and at the

same time of glutting his own revenge, was the idea that floated uppermost in his confused and heated brain. To surrender up the estates—to be liable for the personal property which he had squandered—to sink at once from affluence to absolute pauperism, if not to incarceration,—it was impossible. He continued his rapid movement to and fro, dividing his thoughts between revenge and suicide, when a tap at the door roused him from his gloomy reveries. It was the surgeon who attended Seymour; he came to pay his respects and make a report of his patient's health to Rainscourt, whom he had not seen since his return to the castle.

“Your most obedient, Sir. I am sorry that my patient was not so well when I saw him this morning. I hope to find him better when I go up stairs.”

“Oh!” replied Rainscourt, a faint gleam of deliverance from his dilemmas shining upon his dark and troubled mind.

“Yes, indeed,” replied the medical gentle-

man, who, like many others, made the most of his cases, to enhance the value of his services; like Tom Thumb, who "made the giants first, and then killed them" — "a great deal of fever, indeed—I do not like the symptoms. But we must see what we can do."

"Do you think that there is any chance of his *not* recovering?" asked Rainscourt, with emphasis.

"It's hard to say, Sir; many much worse have recovered, and many not so ill have been taken off. If the fever abates, all will go well—if it does not, we must hope for the best," replied the surgeon, shrugging up his shoulders.

"Then he might die of the wound, and fever attending it?"

"Most certainly he might. He might be carried off in twenty-four hours."

"Thank you for your visit, Mr. B——," replied Rainscourt, who did not wish for his further company. "Good morning."

“Good morning, Sir,” replied the surgeon, as Rainscourt politely bowed him out of the room.

Rainscourt again paced up and down. “He might die of this fever and wound in twenty-four hours. There could be nothing surprising in it;” and as he cogitated, the dæmon entered into his soul. He sat down, and pressed his hands to his burning temples, as he rested his elbows on the table many minutes, perplexed in a chaotic labyrinth of evil thoughts, till the fiend pointed out the path which must be pursued.

He summoned the old nurse. Those who have lived in, or are acquainted with the peculiarities and customs of the sister kingdom, must know that the attachment of the lower Irish to their masters amounts to almost self-devotion. Norah had nursed Rainscourt at her breast, and, remaining in the family, had presided over the cradle of Emily—adhering to Rainscourt in his poverty, and now, in the

winter of her days, basking in the sun of his prosperity.

"The blessings of the day upon the master," said the old woman as she entered.

Rainscourt locked the door. "Norah," said he, "I have bad news to tell you. Are you aware that the castle is no longer mine?"

"The castle no longer yours! Och hone," replied the old woman, opening her eyes wide with astonishment.

"That I am a beggar, and shall be sent to prison?"

"The master to prison—Och hone!"

"That my daughter is no longer an heiress, but without a shilling?"

"The beautiful child without a shilling—Och hone!"

"That you will have to leave—be turned out of the castle?"

"Me turned out of the castle—Och hone!"

"Yes, Norah, all this will take place in a few days."

“And who will do it?”

“Why, the young man up stairs, whose life we are saving. So much for gratitude.”

“Gratitude! Och hone—and so young—and so beautiful, too, as he is.”

“But he may die, Norah.”

“Sure enough he may die,” replied the old woman, brightening up at the idea. “It’s a bad faver that’s on him.”

“And he may recover, Norah.”

“Sure enough he may recover,” replied she, mournfully, “he’s but young blood.”

“Now, Norah, do you love your master—do you love your young mistress?”

“Do I love the master and the mistress?” replied the old woman, indignantly; “and it’s you that’s after asking me such a question!”

“Can you bear to see us turned out of house and home—to be cast on the wide world in poverty and rags? Will you permit it, when, by assisting me, you can prevent it?”

"Can I bear it?—will I assist?—tell me the thing that you'd have me do, that's all."

"I said that the wounded person might die—Norah, he *must* die."

The old woman looked up earnestly at Rainscourt's face, as if to understand him. "I see!"—then remaining with her head down for some time, as if in cogitation, she again looked up. "Will father O'Sullivan give me absolution for that?"

"He will—he shall—I will pay for ten thousand masses for your soul over and above."

"But what would you have me do—so young, and so beautiful, too! I'll think over it to-night. I never sleep much now, the rats are so troublesome."

"Rats!" cried Rainscourt; "why not get some arsenic."

"Arsenic!" echoed the old woman; "is it arsenic for the rats—you mean?"

"Yes," replied Rainscourt, significantly ;
"for all sorts of rats—those who would under-
mine the foundation of an ancient house."

"Sure it is an old house, that of the Rains-
courts," replied the nurse: "but I'm giddy a
little—I'll think a bit."

In a second or two, her face brightened up a
little.

"Why don't you marry the two together?
Such a handsome couple as they'd be!"

"Marry, you old fool! Do you think, now
that he is aware that all the property is his,
that he would marry Emily, without a six-
pence? No—no."

"True—and it's the arsenic you want, then?
—and you're sure that the priest will give abso-
lution?"

"Sure," replied Rainscourt, out of patience ;
"come to me at daylight to-morrow morning."

"Well, I'll think about it to-night when I'm
asleep.—And so young, and so beautiful, too.

Och hone !” murmured the old woman, as she unlocked the door, and with tremulous gait quitted the room.

Rainscourt, left to himself, again became the prey to conflicting passions. Although his conscience had long been proof against any remorse at the commission of the every-day crimes which stained the earth, yet it recoiled at meditated murder. More than once he determined to leave it all to chance, and if Seymour did recover, to fly the country with all the money he could raise ;—but the devil had possession, and was not to be cast out.

The door was again opened, and Emily, radiant with happiness after the interview with Seymour, in which she had plighted and received the troth of her beloved, entered the room.

“ My dear father, Mr. Seymour is so much better this evening.”

“ Would he were in his grave !” replied Rainscourt, bitterly.

Emily had come in, at the request of Seymour, to state to her father what had taken place, but this violent exclamation deterred her. She thought that it was not a favourable moment, and she retired, wishing him good night, with no small degree of indignation expressed in her countenance at his iniquitous wish. She retired to her chamber—her anger was soon chased away by the idea that it was for her sake that her father was so irritated, and that to-morrow all would be well. Bending to her Creator in gratitude and love, and not forgetting Seymour in her visions, she laid her head upon her pillow, and visions of future happiness filled her dreams in uninterrupted succession.

Enjoy them, beautiful and innocent one! Revel in them, if it were possible, to satiety—for they are thy last enjoyment. How much would the misery of this world be increased, if we were permitted to dive into futurity! How few of us would think it worth our while to continue the journey! The life of man is a pilgrimage

in error and in darkness. The ignis fatuus that he always pursues, always deceives him, yet he is warned in vain—at the moment of disappointment, he resolves—sees another, and pursues again. The fruit is turned to ashes in his mouth at the fancied moment of enjoyment—warning succeeds warning—disappointment is followed up by disappointment—every grey hair in his head may be considered as a sad memento of dear bought, yet useless experience—still he continues, spurred on by Hope, anticipating every thing, in pursuit of nothing, until he stumbles into his grave, and all is over.

Little did M'Elvina and the vicar think what the consequences would be of their leaving Rainscourt in his wrath. Little did Rainscourt and the nurse imagine how dreadful and how futile would be the results of their wicked intentions. Little did the enamoured and guileless pair, who now slumbered in anticipated bliss, contemplate what, in the never-ceasing par-

turition of time, the morrow would bring forth.

Early in the morning, Rainscourt, who was awake, and who had not taken off his clothes, was startled by a low tapping at his door. It was the nurse.

“Well,” said Rainscourt, hastily, “have you procured what we were talking of?”

“I have, indeed; but——”

“No buts, Norah, or we part for ever. Where is it? Who is with him?”

“One of the women. I told her I would nurse him after day-light.”

“When does he take his fever draughts?”

“Every two hours—Och hone, he’ll take but one more—So young, and so beautiful, too.”

“Silence, fool; go and send the other woman to bed, and then bring in one of the draughts.”

The old nurse turned back as she was hobbling away,—“And the absolution?”

"Away, and do as I order you," cried Rainscourt, with violence.

"Blessed Jesus, don't talk so loud! It's the whole house will hear you," said the hag, beseechingly, as she left the room.

She returned with the draught. Rainscourt poured in the powder, and shook it with desperation. "Now this is the first draught he must take; give it him directly."

"Och hone!" cried the old woman, as she received the vial in her trembling hands.

"Go; and come back and tell me when he has taken it."

Norah left the room. Rainscourt waited her return in a state of mind so horribly painful that large drops of perspiration poured from his forehead. At one moment, he would have recalled her—the next, beggary stared him in the face, and his diabolical resolution was confirmed. His agony of suspense became so intense that he could wait no longer. He went

to the door of the sick chamber, and, opening it gently, looked in.

The old woman was sitting down on the floor, crouched, with her elbows on her knees, and her face and head covered over with her cloak. The noise of the hinges startled her; she uncovered her head, and looked up. Rainscourt made signs to her, inquiring whether he had taken the draught. She shook her head. He pointed his finger angrily, desiring her to give it. The old woman sunk on her knees, and held up her hands in supplication. Rainscourt beckoned her out—she followed him to his own room.

“Do you see these pistols?” said Rainscourt—“they are loaded. Immediately obey my orders—promise me, on your soul, that you will, or you shall be the occasion of your master’s death. Swear!” continued he, putting one of the pistols to his ear, and his finger to the trigger.

"I will do it—on my soul I will, master dear," cried Norah. "Only put away the pistols, and if he were thousands more beautiful, and if my soul is to be burnt for ever, I'll do it."

Again she returned to the chamber of the victim, followed by Rainscourt, who stood at the door to fortify her resolution.

Seymour was awake, by the old beldame—from a dream, in which the form of Emily blessed his fancy—to take the fatal draught now poured out and presented to him. Accustomed to the febrifuge at certain hours, he drank it off in haste, that he might renew his dreaming happiness. "What is it? It burns my throat!" cried Seymour.

"It's not the like of what you've taken before," said the old woman, shuddering, as she offered him some water to take the taste away.

"Thank you, nurse," said Seymour, as he again sank on his pillow.

CHAPTER XX.

Hor. You see he is departing.

Corn. Let me come to him; give me him as he is. If he be turned to earth, let me but give him one hearty kiss, and you shall put us both into one coffin.

WEBSTER.

It was but a few minutes after the scene described in the last chapter, that Emily awoke from her slumbers, and chid the sun for rising before her. As soon as she was dressed, she descended to inquire after the health of him, whose fate was now entwined with her own. She gently opened the door of the room. The shutters were yet closed, but the sun poured his

rays through the chinks, darting, in spite of the obstruction, a light which rendered the night lamp useless. The curtains of the bed were closed, and all was quiet. Norah sat upon the floor, her eyes fixed upon the ceiling with wild and haggard look, and as she passed the beads which she was telling from one finger to the other (her lips in rapid and convulsive motion, but uttering no sound), it appeared as if she thought the remnant of her life too short for the prayers which she had to offer to the throne above.

Emily having in vain attempted to catch her eye, and fearful of waking Seymour, tripped gently across, and pushed the nurse by the shoulder, beckoning her out of the chamber. Norah followed her mistress into an opposite room, when Emily, who had been alarmed by the behaviour of the old woman, spoke in a low and hurried tone. "Good heavens, what is the matter, Norah? You look so dreadful. Is he worse?"

"Och hone!" said the nurse, her thoughts evidently wandering.

"Tell me, nurse, answer me, is he worse?"

"I don't know," replied Norah; "the doctor will tell."

"Oh God! he's worse—I'm sure he is," cried Emily, bursting into tears. "What will become of me, if my dear, dear Seymour—"

"*Your* dear Seymour?" cried the startled Norah.

"Yes, my dear Seymour. I did not tell you—I love him, nurse—he loves me—we have plighted our troth; and if he dies, what will become of me?" continued the sobbing girl.

"Och hone! and is it the truth, and the real truth, that you're telling me, and *was* he to be your husband?"

"*Was* he!—he *is*, Norah. What did you mean by *was* he?" cried Emily, in hurried accents, seizing the old woman by the wrist, with a look of fearful anxiety.

"Did I say, was he? I did, sure enough,

and it's true too. I thought to do my darling a service, and I cared little for my own soul. So young, and so beautiful too. And it's a nice pair ye would have made. And it's I that have kilt him!! Och hone!" cried Norah, wringing her withered hands.

"Killed him, Norah! What have you done?—tell me directly," screamed Emily, shaking the old hag with all her force—"Quick!"

The old nurse seemed to have all the violence of her mistress's feelings communicated to her as she cried out, with a face of horror, "It was all for ye that I did it. It's the master that made me do it. He said my darling would be a beggar. It's the poison for the rats he's taken. Och, och, hone!" and the old woman sunk on the floor, covering up her head while Emily flew shrieking out of the room.

When McElvina and his party quitted the castle, they returned to McElvina's house. "I cannot but pity Mr. Rainscourt," observed the vicar; "indeed I wish that, notwithstanding his

violence, we had not quitted him without making the communication."

"So do I," replied McElvina; "but the injustice of his accusation prevented me; and I must confess that I have some pleasure in allowing him to remain twenty-four hours in suspense—longer than that, not even my revenge has stomach for."

"I am afraid," observed Debriseau, "that we have done unwisely. The violence and selfishness of the man's character are but too well known, and Seymour is in his power."

"Do not be so uncharitable, Sir," replied the vicar, gravely. "Mr. Rainscourt, with all his faults, is incapable of anything so base as what you have hinted at."

"I trust I have done him injustice," replied Debriseau; "but I saw that in his eye, during the interview, which chilled my blood when I thought of your young friend."

"At all events, when I go up to-morrow morning to see how Seymour is, I think it will

be right to inform Mr. Rainscourt of the facts. I shall be there by daylight. Will you accompany me, Sir?" said M^cElvina to the vicar.

"With pleasure," replied the other; and from this arrangement the vicar and M^cElvina were at the castle, and had sent their cards in to Mr. Rainscourt, at the very time that Emily had beckoned the old nurse out of the chamber.

As long as the deed still remained to be done, the conflict between the conscience and the evil intentions of Rainscourt had been dreadful; but now that it was done, now that the rubicon had been passed, to listen to the dictates of conscience was useless; and, worn out as it had been in the struggle, and further soothed by the anticipations of continued prosperity, it no longer had the power to goad him. In short, conscience for the time had been overcome, and Rainscourt enjoyed, after the tempest, a hollow and deceitful calm, which he vainly hoped would be continued.

When M^cElvina and the vicar were announced, he thought it prudent to receive them. The bottle of brandy, to which he had made frequent applications during the morning, was removed; and having paid some slight attention to his person, he requested that they would walk up into his dressing-room. When they entered, the violence of the preceding day was no longer to be perceived in his countenance, which wore the appearance of mental suffering. The consciousness of guilt was mistaken for humility, and the feelings of both M^cElvina and the vicar were kindly influenced towards Rainscourt.

“Mr. Rainscourt,” said the former, “we pay you this early visit that we may have the pleasure of relieving your mind from a weight which it is but too evident presses heavily upon it. We think, when you hear what we have to impart, you will agree with us, that there will be no occasion for litigation or ill-will. Mr. Seymour and your daughter have repeatedly

met before this, and have long been attached to each other ; and although Mr. Seymour was too honourable to make your daughter an offer at the time that he was friendless and unknown, yet the very first moment after he became acquainted with the change in his circumstances, he made a proposal, and was accepted. I presume there can be no objections to the match, and allow us, therefore, to congratulate you upon so fortunate a termination of a very unpleasant business."

Rainscourt heard it all—it rang in his ears—it was torture, horrible torture. When they thought that his eye would beam with delight, it turned glassy and fixed—when they thought that his features would be illumined with smiles, they were distorted with agony—when they thought that his hands would be extended to seize theirs, offered in congratulation, they were clenched with the rigidity of muscle of the drowning man.

The vicar and M^{rs} Elvina looked at him, and

at each other, in dismay ; but their astonishment was not to last. The door burst open, and the frantic and shrieking Emily flew into the room, exclaiming,—“ They have murdered him !— Oh, God ! they have poisoned him. My father—my father—how could you do it ?” continued the girl, as she sank, without animation, on the floor.

The vicar, whose brain reeled at the dreadful intelligence, had scarcely power to move to the assistance of Emily, while M'Elvina, whose feelings of horror were mingled with indignation, roughly seized Rainscourt by the collar, and detained him his prisoner.

“ I am so,” calmly replied Rainscourt, who, stunned by the condition of his daughter, the futility and blindness of his measures, and the unexpected promulgation of his guilt, offered no resistance. “ Had you made your communication yesterday, Sir, this would not have happened. I surrender myself up to justice. You have no objection to my retiring a few minutes

to my bed-room, till the officers come—I have papers to arrange ?”

M^cElvina acceded ; and Rainscourt, bowing low for the attention, went into the adjoining room, and closed the door. A few seconds had but elapsed, when the report of a pistol was heard. M^cElvina rushed in, and found Rainscourt dead upon the floor, the gorgeous tapestry besprinkled with the blood and brains of the murderer and the suicide.

One more scene, and all is over. Draw up the curtain, and behold the chamber in which, but the evening before, two souls, as pure as ever spurned the earth and flew to Heaven,—two forms, perfect as ever nature moulded in her happiest mood,—two hearts, that beat responsive without one stain of self,—two hands, that plighted troth, and vowed and meant to love and cherish, with all that this world could offer in possession—health, wealth, power of intellect and cultivated minds—Joy and Love hand in hand, smiling on the present—Hope, with her

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Q

gilded wand, pointing to futurity,—all vanished ! And, in their place, standing like funeral mourners, at each corner of the bed, Misery,—Despair,—Agony,—and Death !—Woe, woe, too great for utterance—all is as silent, as horribly silent, as the grave, yawning for its victim.

M^cElvina and Susan are supporting the sufferer in his last agonies ; and as he writhes, and his beseeching eyes are turned towards them, supply the water, which but for a moment damps the raging fire within.

The surgeon has retired from his useless and painful task—habituated to death, but not to such a scene as this.

The vicar, anxious to administer religious balm, knows that in excruciating torture his endeavours would be vain, and the tears roll down his cheeks as he turns away from a sight which his kind heart will not allow him to behold.

Emily is on her knees, holding Seymour's

hand, which, even in his agony, he attempts not to remove. Her face is lying down upon it, that she may not behold his sufferings. She speaks not—moves not—weeps not—all is calm—deceitful calm—her heart is broken !

And there he lies—"the young, the beautiful, the brave"—in one short hour to be—

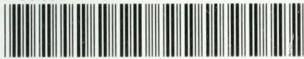
"A thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing."

THE END.

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